ALIGNING THE *SUNNA* AND THE *JAMĀʿA*: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND ISLAMIC SOCIAL FORMATION IN CONTEMPORARY CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

by

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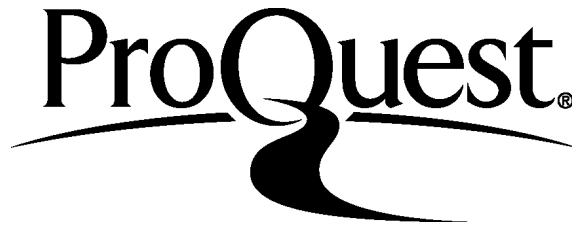
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, who actively discouraged me from socializing with my fellow Indonesian Ḥaḍramīs whilst I was growing up, thereby sparking my subsequent interest to learn more about them.

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This dissertation is the result of my interaction with people, ideas and places in the Ḥaḍramawt valley of Yemen and Indonesia over the past decade. I am indebted to several people and institutions without whose help and guidance this work would not have been completed. In the Ḥaḍramawt I have been assisted by friends and teachers who helped me to find textual materials and answered my unending questions, in particular, Zayd bin Yaḥyā, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Bilfaqīḥ, Muḥammad al-Junayd, Ḥusayn al-Hādi, *Manṣab* ʿAlī al-Ḥabashī, and *Manṣab* ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās. In Pekalongan, many have made my fieldwork not only possible, but also enjoyable. Special thanks are due to Habib Luthfi bin Yahya and Habib Abdullah Bagir — both of whom have generously allowed me to interact with them on a regular basis for two years — and their immediate and extended families, who generously extended their hospitality to me. I shall forever recognize them as my teachers. Others have provided valuable assistance and information, as well as the comfort of their friendship, particularly Ahmad Tsauri, Abdurahman Malik, Abdul Kadir al-Jufri, Syukron Ma'mun, Sunaryo Ahmad, Abdurahman Shahab, Ahmad Assagaf, Ahmad al-Habsyi, Tahir bin Yahya, Mahdi Alatas, Dr. Hamdani Mu'in, *Kyai* Masroni, *Kyai* Zakaria, Uripah Bawon, Anto, Okky, and Hasan Ramadi. In Jakarta, I benefitted from friends and colleagues who were always excited to discuss some ideas from my fieldwork with me: Richard Oh, Tony Rudyansyah, Tommy F. Awuy, Haidar Bagir, Chaider Bamuallim, Faisal Kamandobat, Salim Barakwan, and Sarah Monica. I am also grateful to Abdurahman Basurrah of

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Although this dissertation was completed with the help of these wonderful individuals, I myself am responsible for all of its shortcomings. *Wallāhu aʿlam.*

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Ar.	Arabic
Banser	Barisan Ansor Serba Guna; Ansor's Multipurpose Front
d.	Died
Danlanal	Komandan Pangkalan Angkatan Laut; Commander of Naval Base
FPI	Front Pembela Islam; Islamic Defenders Front
G.B.P.H	Gusti Bendoro Pangeran Haryo; a senior princely title for a son of a Javanese king
G.K.R	Gusti Kanjeng Ratu; a Javanese royal title for a queen or senior princess
Golkar	Golongan Karya; Functional Groups (The Government Political Party during the New Order)
H.	*Haji*, a man who has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca
Ind.	Indonesian
Index of Arabs	10 R/20/A/1409, W.N. Dunn to A.J. Balfour, September 27,1919, Enclosure, "Index ofArabs in the Netherlands East Indies, Anti-British and Friendly"
Jv.	Javanese
Kades	*Kepala Desa*; Village Head
KODAM	Komando Daerah Militer; Military Regional Command
KODIM	Komando Distrik Militer; Military District Command
KORAMIL	Komando Rayon Militer; Military Sub-District

KOREM	Komando Resort Militer; Military Territorial Command
K.R.T	Kanjeng Raden Tumenggung; a Javanese royal title for a high courtier or a grandson of a king
LIPIA:	Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab; Islamic sciences and Arabic Language Institute
MDI	Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah; Islamic Daʿwa Assembly
NKS ṭarīqa	Ṭarīqa Naqshabandiyya-Khālidiyya-Shadhiliyya
NU	Nahdlatul ʻUlama
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional; National Mandate Party
PANGDAM	Panglima KODAM; Commander of the Military Regional Command
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia; Indonesian Democratic Party
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa; National Awakening Party
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia; Indonesian Communist Party
pl.	Plural
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan; United Development Party
r.	Reign
RMKS	Rangkaian Maulid Kanzus Shalawat; Kanzus Shalawat *Mawlid* Network
RMMR	Rangkaian Maulid Masjid al-Rawḍa; al-Rawḍa Mosque *Mawlid* Network
SA ṭarīqa	Ṭarīqa Shādhilīya-ʿAlawiyya
STAIN	Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri; State College of Islamic Studies
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia; Indonesian Armed Forces
YAPI	Yayasan Pesantren Islam; Islamic Pesantren Foundation
YONIF	Batalyon Infantri; Infantry Battalion

GLOSSARY

abangan	(Jv.) nominal or non-practicing Muslim.
abdi dalem	(Jv.) retainers of the Javanese Royal Court.
abjad	(Ar.) a decimal numeral system in which every letter of the Arabic alphabet has an assigned numerical value.
adhān	(Ar.) call to prayer.
ʿālim, pl. *ʿulamāʾ*	(Ar.) literally, one who knows. A term used to refer to a Muslim scholar.
ʿaqīda, pl. *ʿaqāʾid*	(Ar.) creedal text articulating basic Islamic doctrines that consists of compact and simplified explanation of the articles of faith.
awrād	(Ar.) daily prayer or litany.
Bā ʿAlawī	(Ar.) children of ʿAlawī, a term used to designate the *sayyids* of Ḥaḍramawt and their descendants elsewhere.
badal	(Ar. & Jv.) deputy, a title for the deputies of a Sufi *murshid.*
baraka	(Ar.) blessing, benediction, spiritual potency.
batik	(Ind.) wax-resist dyed cloth.
bayʿa	(Ar.) oath of allegiance to a political or spiritual leader.
bidʿa; pl. *bidaʿ*	(Ar.) reprehensible innovations.
bupati	(Ind.) regent, head of a regency.
dabus	(Ar.) iron awl with a handle. A Sufi dance common in several places in Sumatra, Malaya, and Banten performed with sharply pointed iron awls.
dawir:	(Ar.) to go around, revolve, circulate. A term used to refer to Bā ʿAlawīs who frequent the rural areas of Java to profit from Javanese villagers and *kyais.*
dāʿī, pl. *duʿāt*	(Ar.) callers, see: *daʿwa.*
daʿwa	(Ar.) invitation or call to accept God's way.
dhikr	(Ar.) remembrance of God, Sufi ritual chanting.

faqīḥ, pl. *fuqaḥā* (Ar.) jurist, or someone learned in Islamic law.

fardh al-kifāya (Ar.) legal duty imposed on the whole community, in which an individual is no longer required to perform as long as there are others doing it.

fardh al-ʿayn (Ar.) indispensable individual legal duty, every Muslim is required to perform.

fatīḥa (Ar.) the first *sūra*/chapter of the Qurʾān.

fatwā (Ar.) Islamic legal opinion.

ḥabīb/habib (Ar. & Ind.) the honorific of a *sayyid* scholar in Ḥaḍramawt and Indonesia.

ḥadīth (Ar.) oral or textual report of the Prophetic *sunna.*

ḥawl (Ar.) annual commemoration.

ḥawṭa (Ar.) sacred sanctuary in tribal territories.

hawze (Persian) Islamic seminary.

iftar (Ar.) breaking a fast, performed around sunset.

ijāza (Ar.) permission or license to teach or recite a text or litany granted by a scholar or a Sufi *murshid*.

istighrāq (Ar.) immersion/absorption (into God).

jadab (Jv.) see: *majdhūb.*

jamāʿa (Ar.) a collective or a following.

jamʿiyya (Ar.) an association, or modern voluntary association.

kabupaten (Ind.) a regency, an administrative unit.

karam (Ar.) generosity, magnanimity.

Karāma (Ar.) saintly marvels/miracles.

kejawen (Jv.) Javaneseness, a term used for nominal Javanese Muslims or adherents of a "Javanese religion" or spiritualism.

khalwa (Ar.) ritual seclusion.

khurafāt (Ar.) superstition.

kliwon (Jv.) one of the days that makes up the five-day *pasaran* or market cycle used by the Javanese to fix the movement of the weekly rotating markets.

kraton (Jv.) royal court.

kuncen (Jv.) caretaker or gatekeeper.

kyai	(Jv.) honorific for a male Muslim scholar.
kyai khas	(Jv. mix with Ar.) Muslim scholars who are primarily known for their mastery of Islamic esoteric knowledge, like Sufism.
langgar	(Jv.) Islamic prayer hall, or a small mosque.
lelono	(Jv.) spiritual wandering, see: *riḥla.*
lurah	(Jv. & Ind.) the head of a sub-district.
madkhal	(Ar.) ritualized entry or formal entry of a contingent to a tribal territory.
madrasa	(Ar. & Ind.) Islamic school.
majdhūb, pl. *majādhīb*	(Ar.) Someone who is magnetized by divine attraction (*jadhb*).
majelis taklim	(Ind.) Islamic study group.
manāqib	(Ar.) a genre of Arabic literature corresponding to hagiography.
manṣab	(Ar.) the head of a *manṣabate.*
manṣabate	(Ar.) a saintly dynasty that rules a sacred sanctuary (*ḥawṭa*).
maqām	(Ar.) spiritual station.
mashāʾikh	(Ar.) plural form of *shaykh,* a scholar or an elder. In Ḥaḍraamawt the term is used to refer to scholars or scholarly family who are not *sayyids*.
mawlid	(Ar.) celebration of the Prophet's birthday. The term also refers to poetic panegyrics recounting the Prophet's nativity.
maʿrifa	(Ar.) gnosis.
mbah	(Jv.) an honorific for an old person or grandfather/grandmother.
miḥrāb	(Ar.) semicircular prayer niche in a mosque facing the *qibla* where the prayer leader stands as he leads the prayer.
mufti:	(Ar.) a scholar who issues *fatwa.*
mujtahid	(Ar.) a scholar able to perform legal inferences from the scriptures.
mukhtaṣar	(Ar.) legal abridgments consisting of synoptic summaries of classic and complicated legal works.
murīd	(Ar.) seeker or disciple of a *murshid.*
murshid	(Ar.) a Sufi mentor or spiritual director.
nasab	(Ar.) lineal descent.

ngelmu	(Jv.) acquisition of esoteric knowledge.
nyekar	(Jv.) the act of visiting the graves of saints, scholars, and family members.
panatagama	(Jv.) the regulator of religion, a title of a Javanese Muslim monarch.
perdikan	(Jv.) free villages, a status granted by a Javanese ruler to villages or people they considered to be deserving in religious matters, such as Muslim scholars who established a *pesantren*, or due to the existence of saintly graves within its vicinity. These villages were exempted from taxes and compulsory labor but were expected to watch over royal or saintly graves and provide Islamic education.
pesantrens	(Jv.) Islamic boarding school.
priyayi	(Jv.) the old bureaucratic or administrative class of Java. The term originally referred to the younger siblings of the king.
qāḍī	(Ar.) a judge of Islamic law.
qibla	(Ar.) the direction to which Muslims ought to face when they pray.
qiyām	(Ar.) to stand. A ritual of standing up during a *mawlid* when the recited text recounts the moments of the Prophet's birth.
qubba	(Ar.) domed mausoleum.
quṭb	(Ar.) axial saint, the leader of the invisible hierarchy of Islamic saints.
rātib	(Ar.) literally means ordering. The term refers to devotional texts or litanies composed of Qurʾānic verses, poetic prayers and invocations, some of which are repeated several times.
ribāṭ	(Ar.) in Ḥaḍramawt the term refers to Islamic boarding school akin to the Javanese *pesantren.*
riḥla	(Ar.) literally means travel, but is commonly used to denote travel as a means for seeking advanced learning in religious matters and spiritual fulfillment.
salaf	(Ar.) predecessors.
ṣalawāt	(Ar.) salutation to the Prophet Muḥammad.
sālik	(Ar.) someone who pursues a systematic discipline of spiritual wayfaring.
santri	(Jv.) literally means someone who studies religion. The term is used to refer to devout Javanese Muslims.
sayyid, pl. *sāda*	(Jv.) a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad.
senapati	(Jv.) commander.
serat kekancingan	(Jv.) a genealogical certificate attesting to kinship relation to the royal dynasty.

sharīʿa	(Ar.) religious path, or path that God wants His creations to adhere to. Today, the term is commonly used to refer to Islamic law.
shatḥ, pl. *shataḥāt*	(Ar.) ecstatic utterance.
shaykh al-taʿlīm	(Ar.) instructing teacher, someone who conveys knowledge by following an established curriculum of study.
shirk	(Ar.) idolatry, or worshipping an entity other than God.
silsila	(Ar.) chain of line of succession, spiritual genealogy or lineage.
siyar	(Ar.) a safety guarantor for other travelers and merchants who sought safe passages through tribal territories.
siyāsa sharʿiyya	(Ar.) *sharīʿa*-oriented policy, a principle allowing legitimate rulers to establish their own ruling as they see fit even if no precedents are found in the Qurʾān or the *sunna*.
sufi	(Ar.) someone who practices Sufism or Islamic "mysticism."
suḥba	(Ar.) companionship between a disciple and his/her Sufi master for a protracted amount of time.
sulṭa rūhiyya	(Ar.) spiritual power.
sulūk	(Ar.) a systematic discipline of spiritual wayfaring.
sunna	(Ar.) habit, custom, way or tradition. Muslims use the term to refer to the deeds, utterances, and spoken approval of the Prophet Muḥammad.
sūra	(Ar.) a chapter of the Qurʾān.
taḥkīm	(Ar.) a formal contract between a disciple and his/her Sufi master.
taqlīd	(Ar.) imitation, whereby an individual follows the the legal views or opinions of an established Islamic school of law.
tarājim	(Ar.) biographical encyclopedias.
ṭarīqa	(Ar.) a spiritual path, Sufi tradition or order.
tawassul	(Ar.) the act of invoking, petitioning, or praying on behalf of someone deemed to be close to God to solicit divine favor.
umma	(Ar.) the Muslim community as a whole.
ʿurf	(Ar.) tribal law or custom.
walī, pl. *awliyāʾ*	(Ar., Ind, Jv.) a friend or God, a saint.
wali sanga	(Jv.) nine saints believed to be the earliest missionaries of Islam in Java.

wayang:	(Jv.) Shadow puppet.
wilāya	(Ar.) friendship with God, the doctrine of sainthood.
wuḍuʾ	(Ar.) Islamic ritual ablution.
wulayṭī	(Ar.) a Ḥaḍramī born in Ḥaḍramawt as opposed to the diaspora.
Zafīn	(Ar.) a dance that originated in Arabia and known by various names in the Indonesian Archipelago such as *japin/jipin/jepin/dana.*
ziyāra	(Ar.) pilgrimage or visitation. The term is used to refer to an annual public/ collective commemoration and visitation to a tomb of a saint.

NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION AND DATES

The transliteration of Arabic terms and proper names used in this dissertation follows the standard of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and the *Encyclopaedia of Islam.* The terms and proper names are represented with full diacritics and the sounds of the Arabic alphabet is as follows: ʾ(hamza), b, t, th, j, ḥ, kh, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ẓ, ‘ (ayn), gh, f, q, k, l, m, n, h, w, y. The short vowels are represented as: a (*fatha*), i (*kasra*), u (*dumma*). The long vowels are represented as: ā, ī and ū. Diphthongs are represented as *ay* and *aw*, as in *khayr* and *yawm*. The definite article *al-* is not changed according to pronunciation, for ease of visual recognition. The *ta marbūṭa* is represented as pronounced: as a final *–a*, unless the word is part of an *iḍāfa* phrase, in which case it is represented as *–at*. To ease readability for non-Arabic speakers, plural form of Arabic terms are given in the Arabic singular with the English plural -s added (*manṣabs* instead of *manāṣib*, *faqīḥs* instead of *fuqahāʾ*). Exceptions are made with words that are better known in English in their plural forms (thus *ʿulamāʾ* instead of *ʿālims*).

For Indonesian and Javanese terms and proper names, I have given all in their modern spellings where the same name is used, or I have retained the older name when context decrees that we are speaking of Batavia or Betawi and not Jakarta. Personal names follow the spelling employed by the people themselves. Thus I used the Latinized Habib Luthfi bin Yahya and Habib Abdullah Bagir rather than the Arabic Ḥabīb Luṭfi bin Yaḥyā and Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh Bāqir, except when it pertains to historical individuals who only spell their names in Arabic. For terms

deriving from the shared Arabo-Islamic tradition, I have maintained the fully marked Arabic renderings and ignored the Southeast Asian duplications except in few cases.

Dates include both common era (C.E.) and Islamic (*anno Hegirae* or A.H.) forms in cases where the the individual discussed used Islamic dating system. Otherwise, I only give the common era. When the two appear together, the Islamic year precedes that of the common era. For example, the death date of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād is given as 1132/1730. This corresponds to A.H. 1132 and 1720 C.E.

Introduction

> It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We produce the shoots of each plant, then bring greenery from it, and from that We bring out grains, one riding on the other in close-packed rows. From the date palm come clusters of low-hanging dates, and there are gardens of vines, olives, and pomegranates, alike yet different.
>
> -*The Holy Qurʾān, Livestock* (6:99)

> If I shut my ears to the language, I thought, and stretch the date palms a bit and give them a few coconuts, I could easily be back somewhere in Bengal.
>
> -Amitav Ghosh, *The Imam and the Indian*

Pekalongan, Central Java, 16 Ramaḍān 1433/ 4 August 2012, 9:40 pm. A middle-aged Javanese man, by the name of Suryo, came to see the notable Ḥaḍramī-Indonesian Sufi scholar Habib Muhammad Luthfi b. ʿAlī bin Yaḥyā.[1] As he entered Habib Luthfi's house, he saw the scholar surrounded by his disciples. Every evening during the holy month of Ramaḍān, Habib Luthfi holds classes on Qurʾānic exegesis and Prophetic *sunna*, attended by his disciples, many of whom travel from different parts of Java and stay for a whole month in Pekalongan to learn from their teacher. Suryo took his seat quietly in one corner. One of Habib Luthfi's disciples was reciting the chapter on ablution from the *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, a voluminous commentary of the Bukhārī collection of *ḥadīth,* written by Egyptian scholar Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (d. 852/1449). Habib

[1] Habib (Ar. *ḥabīb,* Ar. Pl. *ḥabāʾib*), meaning 'beloved,' is an honorific used in the Ḥaḍramawt and Southeast Asia to address a Muslim scholar acknowledged as a *sayyid* or descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Luthfi was listening attentively to the recitation. Moments later, he gave a hand signal to the reciter who thereupon stopped the recitation. Habib Luthfi then talked for twenty minutes, describing to his audience how the Prophet Muḥammād performed the ablution, while enacting the *sunna* of ablution through bodily gestures. The disciples eagerly watched the performative reenactment of the *sunna* that clarifies the often times perplexing textual *ḥadīth* descriptions of the act. Some were taking notes. Suryo, however, did not seem to be interested in the performance, choosing to sit quietly in the corner while observing the intricate pattern of the Persian rug that he was sitting on.

Once the class was over, Suryo stood up and approached Habib Lutfhi, who remained seated and surrounded by his disciples. He greeted Habib Luthfi, sat next to him and introduced himself. He told Habib Luthfi that he had traveled all the way from Lampung, in South Sumatra to see him. Habib Luthfi smiled, welcomed, and thanked him for making the long journey. Suryo then informed Habib Luthfi that he had been directly appointed by the Prophet Muḥammad as the Mahdi, the prophesied redeemer of Islam who will lead the Muslims before the Day of Judgement and restore the Prophetic *sunna* to the community. He told Habib Luthfi that he had been instructed by the Prophet to come to Pekalongan to see the scholar and demand his allegiance:

> I am giving Habib twenty-four hours to consider. If you and your *jamāʿa* [followers, congregation] choose to pledge your allegiance (Ind. *bai'at,* Ar. *bayʿa*) to me, then you will all be saved. But if you choose to ignore my warning, then you will all be destroyed together with all the evils of this world. I am under the instruction of the Prophet Muḥammad.

The disciples bursted into laughter and ridiculed Suryo. Habib Luthfi put his hand around Suryo and addressed him in a fatherly manner. “How is the family?,” he asked Suryo. “Are they well?,”

"Are you in need of money?," "What has disappointed you?," "Is there anything I can help you with?". The questions, none of which concerned his claim to be the Mahdi, irritated Suryo. He stood up and gave Habib Luthfi a piece of paper with his mobile phone number on it, and repeated his warning: "Remember Habib, I am only giving you twenty-four hours to join the real people of *sunna* and *jamāʿa* (*ahlu sunnah wal jama'ah yang sejati*)." Habib Luthfi did not heed Suryo's warning and chose to light his cigarette instead. The disciples continued to giggle among themselves. Without saying anything more, Suryo left the house. He was never seen again.

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This vignette encapsulates the main concern of this dissertation, that of the relationship between post-Prophetic Islamic religious authority and social formation. It shows how the formation of Islamic religious authority lies at the intersection of vertical and horizontal axes, both of which need to be established and actively maintained. The vertical axis connects a claimant to the Prophetic past. The horizontal axis joins him/her to fellow Muslims. Connection to the Prophetic past can be established through various means, including the mastery of textual sources and oral transmissions of *ḥadīths* that point to the normative teachings and customs of the Prophet, the *sunna*. The *sunna* is taken as the distinctive character of the Muslims, consisting of duties, norms, beliefs, and rules of conduct, all of which are taken to be the historical realizations of the divine teachings as revealed to the Prophet and entextualized in the Qurʾān. Connection to the Prophetic past may also be established through lineal descent (*nasab*) or spiritual genealogies (*silsila*) attesting to a temporal continuity between a contemporary claimant and the Prophetic past, positing him/her as a Prophetic inheritor. It may also be forged through visions and dreams that facilitate interactions between contemporary actors and the spirit of the Prophet.

Connection to a Prophetic past allows an individual to transmit the *sunna* to his/her fellow Muslims, who in turn can recreate it in their personal and inter-personal lives. For a vertical connection to be taken as authoritative, however, it needs to be recognized by others, hence the importance of establishing a horizontal axis. There are multiple actors, who claim to embody and transmit the *sunna.*[2] The question then becomes, what mechanisms and processes allow for an individual to be recognized by others as an authoritative connector to the Prophetic past. Both Habib Luthfi and Suryo are claimants to such a role, and yet while the former was able to effortlessly perform and transmit the *sunna* to his disciples, the latter became an object of ridicule. The main difference being that the former has cultivated a stable *jamāʿa* (following/ congregation) while the latter was a lone actor who attempted — ineffectively one might add — to form a *jamāʿa* by demanding others to pledge their allegiance to him.

This dissertation is not about Suryo, but about Habib Luthfi and his fellow Bā ʿAlawī scholars in contemporary Indonesia, who have succeeded in forming *jamāʿas* that revolve around their authority as the articulators of the Prophetic *sunna*.[3] The Bā ʿAlawīs are an ethnically Arab group acknowledged as *sayyids*, or descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad, who for long have migrated to Indonesia from the Ḥaḍramawt valley of Yemen. The Bā ʿAlawīs brought their Sufi tradition, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* and succeeded in maintaining eminence — particularly in the sphere of religion — among local populations (Alatas 2010; Alatas 2011; Ho 2006; Freitag 2003; Knysh 1999a; Mobini-Kesheh 1999). This dissertation seeks to understand the ways through

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[2] Some Muslims even think that the *sunna* is only transmittable through its entextualized forms in the *ḥadīth* collections, thereby excusing them from the necessity of finding a living connector. In short, there are many ways of establishing connections to the Prophetic past, some of which emphasize the centrality of living connectors.

[3] While this dissertation is not about a lone actor, there are other excellent scholarly work that does focus on the eccentric loner, like Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980) and Anna Tsing's *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (1993).

which Habib Luthfi, and other historical and contemporary Bā ʿAlawī actors like him, have been able to become recognized as religious authorities, as living connectors to the Prophetic past. It examines how such actors establish and project vertical connections to the Prophet and assemble their horizontal *jamāʿa,* and the various works of mediation involved (recall how Suryo gave his mobile phone number on a piece of paper to Habib Luthfi). Such projects take place in plural and contentious social terrain where other claimants to such connecting roles are also actively reproducing the *sunna* and assembling their *jamāʿas,* while other social formations — including the state — continuously take shape, thereby generating synergies and contestations. This dissertation presents a polyphonic story of how different and discordant alignments between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* come to be formed through the active role of varying connectors.[4] It is a story about how the *sunna* defines, and becomes rooted within, distinct social frameworks, as well as how it is diversified and particularized through its alignment with different *jamāʿas*.

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"As Indonesian Muslims, we should know how to plant (*menanam*) coconuts, and not date palms." Thus spoke Habib Luthfi bin Yahya (b. 1947) in a sermon delivered in front of thousands of devotees who flocked his *zāwiya* that Friday morning. It was a *Jum'at kliwon*, or *kliwon* Friday, a day when Habib Luthfi holds his monthly gathering that draws his followers from all

[4] In writing this dissertation, I am inspired by what the Czech novelist Milan Kundera (1988: 73-4) describes as the polyphonic in the novel or what Bakhtin (1981) calls heteroglossia. In music, polyphony is the simultaneous presentation of two or more voices or melodic lines that are bound together while remaining relatively independent. Polyphony in the novel begins by unilinear composition which opens up to rifts in the continuous narration of a story. Kundera exemplifies this with Cervantes and the unilinear travel story of Don Quixote. As he travels, Quixote meets other characters, who narrate their own stories, thereby diversifying the novel's linear framework by introducing different voices and narratives.

over Java to his hometown of Pekalongan.[5] Habib Luthfi's utterance generated excitement from the audience, who cheered and clapped as the scholar made his concluding statement. Why were they cheering? Why the sudden clapping of hands? Why did a seemingly simple statement about the cultivation of dates and coconuts uttered by a Ḥaḍramī-Indonesian Muslim scholar generate such excitement among the audience? In fact, what is the relationship between Islam or being a Muslim and the cultivation of dates or coconuts? To address these questions, perhaps we should consider the resonances evoked by both date and coconut palms for contemporary Indonesians.

Date palms evoke an exotic image of the Arabian physical landscape understood by many Indonesian Muslims to be the cradle of religious authenticity mediated, among others, by the producers of popular culture who assemble visual imageries of an empty desert dotted with oases and date palms for Islamic television programs. Television documentary series, like the highly-rated "footsteps of the prophets" (*jejak rasul*), trace the sacred history of Islam while reproducing imageries of Arabian desert as the cradle of religious authenticity, sincerity, and piety. Desert scenes, complete with images of camel caravans and date palms, are consistently reproduced as television stage sets for Islamic musical performances.

The image of coconut palms, on the other hand, conjures a panoramic picture of the captivating tropical landscape and the congeries of tropical islands that make up the vast Indonesian Archipelago, immortalized, among others, by the legendary nationalist composer Ismail Marzuki (d. 1958) in his *Rayuan Pulau Kelapa* (The Allure of the Coconut Islands).

[5] *Kliwon* is one of the days that makes up the five-day *pasaran* or market cycle used by the Javanese in the olden days to fix the movement of the weekly rotating markets. The days of the *pasaran* cycle are: *legi, pahing, pon, wagé,* and *kliwon*. Both the seven-day and the five-day week cycles are used concurrently forming calendrical combinations. Thus a *kliwon* Friday is followed by a *legi* Saturday, *pahing* Sunday, *pon* Monday, *wagé* Tuesday, and *kliwon* Wednesday. This means that Habib Luthfi's gathering, which takes place on a *kliwon* Friday, recurs every thirty five days (7 x 5 = 35). For the Javanese, the combination between a *kliwon* and a Friday is taken to be an auspicious time for religious rituals and visitations to saints' shrines (Guillot & Chambert-Loir 2007: 353-4).

Indonesian children are taught to sing the song at schools, whilst every evening, television channels and radio stations play it as their closedown. Similarly, the Indonesian boy scout movement, a requisite component of the public school system, uses the image of a germinating coconut husk — known as *cikal* or *tunas* — as their emblem. The official explanation of the symbol stresses how a *cikal* represents continuity, versatility, rootedness in the land, desire for elevation, and the emergence of a new generation.

Taking the contemporary currency of both images into consideration, Habib Luthfi's message can be understood as a critique of those who attempt to transplant what they take to be a more authentic articulation of Islam from Arabia to Indonesia. On one level that seems to be why his statement provoked enthusiasm. Habib Luthfi's statement can be situated amidst various projects of "indigenizing" Islam that aim to arrive at a functioning synthesis between a "foreign religion" and "local culture".[6] One observer, for instance, has described Habib Luthfi's project as developing "nationalistic Sufism" (Arifin 2012). The mere fact that Habib Luthfi chooses a *kliwon* Friday — a day recognized as highly auspicious among the Javanese — to fix his recurrent gathering certainly lends credence to such a reading. The notion of indigenization is a real ideological formation that emerged from various discussions, debates, conversations, sermons, conferences, and publications among contemporary Indonesian Muslims. It emerged as a response to multifarious, and often conflictual, processes and itineraries that are often lumped together and simplistically identified as *Arabisasi* (*Arabization*). This particular notion has taken

[6] One of the foremost proponents of indigenization was the late Muslim scholar turned fourth Indonesian President, Abdurrahman Wahid (d. 2009). In Wahid's vague explanation:

> The indigenization of Islam is neither '*Jawanisasi*' (Javanization) nor syncretization. The indigenization of Islam is merely to take local [Indonesia] necessities into account in formulating religious laws, without having to alter the construct of the laws themselves. It is not an attempt to put aside [religious] norms for the sake of culture, but simply to ensure that those norms accommodate the necessities of culture by using the opportunity provided by variations in understanding the [Qur'anic] texts,… (quoted in Effendy 2003: 78).

different figurations, the most recent of which is the notion of *Islam Nusantara* (Archipelagic Islam) that is posited in diametrical opposition to an analogously essentialized *Islam Arab* (Arab Islam), which resonates with an old colonial juxtaposition of "good Islam" and "bad Islam" that has resurfaced as a key diction in the rhetorics of the U.S.-led War on Terror.

So as an influential Indonesian Muslim scholar of Ḥaḍramī descent, Habib Luthfi's statement — which at a first glance seems to support the idea of indigenization — was welcomed with enthusiasm by his "traditionalist" Indonesian audience (on this notion, see: chapter 2), many of whom were dismayed by some of their fellow countrymen who prefer to speak like an Arab (even without knowing the language), dress like an Arab, and idealize Islam in Arabia while criticizing local customs. As one of my interlocutors told me, "if Habib Luthfi, who is an Arab and a descendant of the Prophet endorses the development of *Islam Jawa* (Javanese Islam), then why would the Javanese Gatot change his name to Khaththat and start dressing up like an Arab?." He was referring to the Salafi preacher Muhammad al-Khaththat the chairman of *Forum Ummat Islam* (Islamic Nation Forum), whose real name Gatot, is a common Javanese name derived from Gatotkacha, one of the protagonists of the Hindu epic Mahabharata. During my fieldwork, I have repeatedly heard similar jokes and criticism. Habib Luthfi's popularity among the Javanese certainly stems, among others, from his Javanese orientation and disposition, his ability to deliver sermons in refined Javanese, and his vast knowledge of Javanese history and mythology. For this reason he is often described as "*Arab tapi njawani*" (an Arab who acts more like a Javanese).

Does this mean that we need to adopt these ideological formations — which certainly deserve meticulous study — as analytical categories in understanding Islamic social formation in

contemporary Indonesia? Several scholars of Indonesian Islam seem to think so.[7] The underlying problem with the notion of indigenization as an analytical approach, however, lies in its assumption of the existence of a universalized and acultural Islam that can then be integrated into different cultures.[8] Assuming the existence of an acultural Islam is also shared by proponents of Salafism and other more literalist readings of Islam and has fueled their zeal for purifying Islam of its cultural accretions. Such a logic is similar to what Wendy Brown has identified as liberalism's conceit regarding the universality of its basic principles, which are assumed to operate independently of politics and culture, rendering culture extrinsic to — or in Brown's words as something that can be "entered" and "exited" (2006: 153) — and not constitutive of religion.

What kind of analytic tools then can we use to make sense of Islam as a socio-discursive reality without perceiving it as independent of politics and culture (hence the recurrent usage of adjectives like "cultural Islam" and "political Islam")? How can we analyze a lived instantiation of Islam without succumbing to, or reproducing the purportedly neutral old dichotomies like global Islam vs. local Islam, standard vs. vernacular, central vs. peripheral? Perhaps Habib Luthfi's agricultural metaphor can show us the way, provided that we read it more literally. Instead of comprehending the symbolic currency of date and coconut palms among contemporary Indonesians, let us take both plants and the act of planting itself literally.

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[7] See for example recent works by Bruinessen 2015; Bruinessen 2013; Ricklefs 2012; Hefner 2011; Baso 2006. For more popular works, see: Naipaul 1999; Dhume 2009.

[8] As the aforementioned explanation offered by Wahid illustrates, such an assumption of a universal and acultural Islam is usually posited in a legalistic framework (Ahmed 2015), as if law is not in itself a cultural process (Moore 1979; Comaroff & Roberts 1981; Rosen 1989; Merry 2000).

Both date and coconut palms are members of the monophyletic *Arecaceae* (also known as *palmae*) botanical family. Environmental change brought about a long and slow process of adaptive radiation that diversified a common ancestor into around 200 subdivisions and 2,600 subspecies, each exhibiting shared morphological and physiological traits. As one of the most extensively cultivated plants, palms have been central to the formation of human sociality in several parts of the world. Towns, villages, and cities emerged around them. Their cultivation demanded workers who came from different places and opened up divisions of labor. Their trunks and leaves were crucial for infrastructural construction and furniture production. The timbers were also a primary component for building transportation technologies, whether Arabian dhows or Trobriand canoes, that have historically facilitated the expansion of sociality. At the same time, parts and products of both date and coconut palms have been used for religious rituals and magic.

So here we have a common ancestor whose actuality has vanished and whose mode of existence can only be grasped virtually and partially by cultivating its botanical descendants. Cultivation, however, involves understanding different climes and topography, as well as mastering various skills and technologies, all of which are aimed at enabling and improving plant growth, quality, yield, and developing their resistance to diseases, pests, and environmental stresses. Agriculture is a project that gathers different actors, actions, and other entities onto a tract of land, which in itself is conditioned by climatic and topographical factors, and needs to be systematically ordered and sown. In the process, these various elements become associated with one another. Cultivating dates in a desert valley and planting coconuts in a sandy tropical beach are projects that lead to the emergence and growth of authochtonous but nevertheless

monophyletic social assemblages, although their constitutive elements like the farmers, the seeds, the tools, the tractors may come from different places. Agriculture is in short, a social formation.

Similar to date and coconut agriculture, Islam is a name for an ongoing project that involves the cultivation of a growing entity. It seeks to cultivate particular characters and traits in living individuals that are deemed to be beneficial for their growth and strengthen their resistance to things that are regarded as stunting their growth. Like agriculture, it is a particular and situated project of constituting sociality, assembling collectivity, controlling and expanding its field, and delineating its boundaries. The Prophet Muḥammad — himself taken as a heteroglossic assemblage made up of divine and human speech — cultivated a social field, in ways that were different from the dominant tribal social formations of his day. An enduring bundle of composite entities emerged from his particular cultivation techniques. When he died, others continued his project, and not long thereafter, they began to disagree on the proper way to cultivate, or the *sunna* of cultivation. Allow me to present a caricatural representation of these historical disagreements (and do note their consistent gender):

Mr. AH: Let us introduce new cultivation techniques. Innovations and new associations conform to the Prophet's way and are needed for the social assemblage to persist and grow. As we travel and attempt to cultivate fields in different environments, we think that some of the old techniques are no longer suitable for the changing topography. These novel innovations are still in line with the Prophet. What is important is the act of cultivation, not its technical details!

Mr. M: We in Medina have carefully maintained the field that the Prophet once cultivated. As inhabitants of the Prophet's city, we are the most familiar to his way and we know every detail. Other cultivators out there should follow what we do. We are the standard!

Mr. Sh: No one knows the proper way to cultivate except for the Prophet's immediate family and descendants! We should all be the cultivated and recognize them as the cultivator.

Mr. B: Look at us, we have painstakingly compiled oral reports detailing how the Prophet cultivated his field and compiled them into written anthologies. We even know how he walked, talked, the clothes he wore, and the various objects he possessed and how he used them.

Mr. Sf: Let us think carefully about this notion of cultivation. I think what is important is not the act of cultivating the field. Look at those who claim to be cultivators, they only do so to sit on thrones and enjoy worldly power! What is important is how to cultivate ourselves and our spiritualities so that we can be successful in the hereafter. Only those who have cultivated themselves and are spiritually connected to the Prophet can cultivate others. Do you know that some of us even learn directly from having visions of the Prophet?

Mr. Shf: Enough! All these talks about the proper way to cultivate the field is not going to help us. I think from now on we should just stick to the reports that Mr. B and his colleagues have compiled. You guys cannot just say that what you are doing is consistent with what the Prophet did. Some of you are even deducing new techniques of cultivation and claim it to be the Prophet's, while in truth, you took them from an old Persian tome. Show me some authentic reports narrated by trustworthy transmitters! Sorry Mr. AH, the way of the Prophet can only be found in the letters.

A student of Islamic History would be able to recognize which historical group each of these represent. Here I am not trying to reconstruct the intellectual and social complexities that made up the first few centuries of Islamic history. To do so would not do justice to the erudition of the many historians who had undertaken such a challenge.[9] My aim is simply to suggest that one way to study Islam would be to look at it as a project of constituting an ideally growing social assemblage that revolves around a particular custom or way established by the Prophet. An emic term that describes the basic unit of such a social assemblage is *jamāʿa,* which literally means a

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[9] For the historical contestation over the definition of *sunna* see: Ansari 1972; Juynboll 1996; Melchert 1997; Motzki 2002; Hallaq 2005; Brown 2007.

collective, following, congregation. The custom that it revolves around is known as the *sunna*.[10] Islam can therefore be understood as *a project of constituting a sunna-aligned jamāʿa*. Thus the largest Islamic denomination, that constituted 85-90% of the world's Muslim population define themselves as *ahl al-sunna wa al-jamāʿa* (people of the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*), or simply, *sunni*.

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The question regarding the relationship between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* is one that became decisive in the first century of Islamic history, in light of several civil wars that divided the Muslims over the issue of legitimate leadership, and the subsequent consolidation of the Umayyad Caliphate under the Marwānids. Under the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 685-705), the state attempted to pacify several internal revolts under the banner of the *jamāʿa* principle of Muslim unity. Such a principle was based on a sense of power and unity of the Arab ruling community, particularly the Syrian Arabs, and was sustained by administrative machinery, legal standards, economic order, most of which were based on the heritage of the peoples they

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[10] The term *sunna* comes from the Arabic root S-N-N, which means "fashion" or "shape". Adis Duderija provides a clear and succinct description of the evolution of the term:

> Over time, the term Sunnah was increasingly used in the context of human behavior, and as "a way, course, rule, mode or manner of acting or conducting life" thus becoming equivalent to the word *sira.* Thereafter it evolved to signify moral appropriateness and normativeness of a human worthy of being followed. Ibn Manzur defines Sunnah as a "commendable straightforward manner of conducting oneself (*al sunnat al-tariqat al-maḥmudat al-mustaqimah*) (2012: 400-401).

While *sunna* generally means habit, custom, or tradition, Muslims, however, have used the term to refer to the deeds (*fiʿl*), utterances (*qawl*), and spoken approval (*taqrīr*) of the Prophet Muḥammad as encapsulated, among others, in various *ḥadīths* (reports) that are deemed to be authentic according to criteria applied by *ḥadīth* science criticism (*ʿulūm al-ḥadīth*). When Muslims speak of the *sunna,* they refer by default to the *sunnat al-nabi* or the *sunna* of the Prophet. The scope of the *sunna* has become both epistemologically and methodologically dependent upon and constrained by *ḥadīth*. Such a definition, however, only emerged towards the end of the second Islamic century due to several factors including the systematic collection and criticism of *ḥadīth*, the rise of the *ḥadīth* scholars, and the influence of the eminent jurist al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204) who coalesced *sunna* and *ḥadīth.* Prior to this, *sunna* was conceptually independent from *ḥadīth* in that the former term was also used to refer to the standard of exemplary behavior laid down by the Prophet's caliphal successors and companions. The first four caliphs, for instance, set their own standards and ruled the community in the spirit of the Prophetic custom. They were not only copying the Prophet's action but were also involved in providing their own solutions to the new problems that arose in the community. One scholar, for example, states that "the authority of the Companions was well-established circa 75 AH and the precepts and practices of the Prophet as well as the Companions continued to be characterised as Sunnah" (Ansari 1972: 280). As several scholars have noted, early Islam was characterized by plurality of *sunnas,* that of individuals other than the Prophet who set their own standards orientated to the Prophetic custom.

had conquered. "Their palaces were decorated in the usual Hellenistic fashion, the taxes they raised were essentially the same taxes as those raised by the governments before them," the historian Marshall Hodgson (1974: I, 251) described the situation. Nevertheless,

> As the new generation — and not only at Medina — began exploring what Islam could mean to them personally now that its political triumph was assured, their thinking was deeply coloured by the experiences of the civil wars. The notion of the *jamāʿa*, the unity of the community, did not suffice as a comprehensive Islamic ideal, even when it was accepted on the specific point of who should be caliph… Thus many of those who had been associated with the defeated parties, not only in Iraq but even in the Ḥijāz, came to constitute a semi-political, semi-cultural body of opposition to the ruling trends among the Arabs (Hodgson 1974: I, 248)

The question of what a *jamāʿa* is did not only pertain the notion of the pragmatic political unity as envisaged by the ʿUmayyad state. Among non-state actors and those who consciously opposed the state's monopoly of socio-political leadership, the notion of *jamāʿa* became intertwined with the notion of a *sunna*-based piety and various attempts to define Islam:

> But no rivals to the Marwānīs could present a plausible case unless the moral position of the Marwānīs, based on the *jamāʿa* ideal of unity, could be undermined. It was here that the oppositionally inclined among the Piety-minded could play a role and at the same time escape their political isolation. Such men and women, for whom Islamic piety took precedence over any other interest, were found among both the disaffected Arabs and the Muslim Mawālī [clients/slaves/freedmen], and even among the Syrian Arabs themselves. As they took leisure, now that the great excitements of the days of first conquest were over, to consider more closely what 'Islam' ought really to mean, they realized it must reach beyond simply being the envied badge of a favoured ruling class… But such a viewpoint led them to discover the points of moral weakness in the régime; in doing so they became rallying points for all the elements of potential opposition. The outcome was that at last they gathered it into an all-Islamic tendency, rather than merely a series of local rebelliousness that might have broken up the community and so, probably, done away with Islam altogether. (Hodgson 1974: I, 250)

Here Hodgson is describing the proliferation of multiple *jamāʿas* that revolved around the figures of what he terms the "piety-minded," who articulated their opposition to the state in

idealistic religious attitudes. These scholars wanted Islam to be more than merely a badge of the ruling class:

> They expected Islam to carry with it its own law, its own learning, its own etiquette, its own principles of private life and of public order: to be self-sufficient without any reference (in principle) to pre-Islamic ways as such.. the proposal that the Piety-minded offered in response to the discontents present in the social and historical situation were summed up as government according to 'Qurʾān and *sunna*' (Hodgson 1974: I, 251-2).

According to Hodgson, "the crux lay in defining the *sunna*":

> What was objected to as contrary to *sunna* was the seemingly arbitrary departure from what Muslim Arabs had expected — or hoped for. The restrictions and indignities for the privileged Arab families which were inseparable from the development of a centralized monarchy were seen as innovations, called *bidʿa*; and the seemingly more liberal days of earlier rulers — especially of the Medina caliphs and of Muḥammad himself — were recalled as models of what all could agree ought to be: as *sunna*. At the same time, it was recognized that the *bidʿa,* the deplored innovation, was not entirely a matter of the rulers; their power and arbitrariness were partly the consequence of the moral laxity and luxurious habits of the Muslims themselves — for it was in these terms that moralizers naturally saw the assimilation of the Arab ruling class into the cultural and social life of the occupied lands. Accordingly, abiding by the *sunna* would mean restoration, for both rulers and Muslims at large, of the norms of the primitive caliphate and (or, among many Shīʿīs, only) of Muḥammad's time; what did not go back to such times was *bidʿa* and ought to be eliminated from Muslim life. (Hodgson 1974: I, 252)

The Islamic *sunna* thus became increasingly seen to be the norms that can differentiate Muslims from other groups and their diverse ways and customs, their *sunnas*. In the eyes of the "piety-minded," the proper Islamic *sunna* was also differentiated from the Arab *sunna*. This in turn stressed the attempt to retrospectively recover an Islamic *sunna* as a norm which a *jamāʿa* can inherit, grow and revolve around. Hodgson's historical reconstruction of the socio-political contestations of the first two centuries of Islam highlights one crucial point that will be further developed in this dissertation, namely, that the discursive project of recovering the *sunna* cannot be separated from the socio-political project of constituting a *jamāʿa*. The two are mutually

constitutive. As such, one way to understand Islam as a historical and sociological reality would be to posit it as an articulatory project, that of connecting the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*.

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Like the vanished common ancestor of both the date and coconut palms, the *sunna* can only be grasped by retrospective definition, selection, articulation, delineation, and comparison, all of which have precipitated endless debates and disputes down to the present day. Is *sunna* the embodied practice of the Medinans or of the Prophet's family no matter where they reside? Is it only what is illustrated in the *ḥadīth,* i.e. oral and textual reports of the *sunna* with clear chain of transmission to the Prophet or to a hearer or eyewitness of the Prophetic discourse and acts? Does it include teachings conveyed posthumously by the Prophet through dreams and visions? Can a new innovation that purportedly encapsulates the spirit, and not the letter, of the Prophetic teachings be considered a *sunna?*

Similar questions emerge around the notion of *jamāʿa*. What is a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa,* and what shape should such an alignment take? Is it a Caliphate, Sultanate, *kraton,* or a post-Westphalian nation-state? Is it a Sufi *ṭarīqa,* political party, *pesantren,* or simply an immediate or extended family? Can the Taliban Emirate of Afghanistan or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria be considered a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*? Or does a *jamāʿa* need to literally describe itself as a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* — rather than state, caliphate, or emirate — like the *Jamāʿat ahl al-sunna li-l-daʿwa wa-l-jihād* (*Jamāʿa* of the people of the *sunna* for preaching and armed struggle), otherwise known by their Hausa moniker Boko Haram?

Understanding Islam as an articulatory project of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* also opens up another crucial question, namely, what connects or mediates the *sunna* and the

jamāʿa? What processes are involved in establishing such connections? What are these connectors? Dreams, texts, humans, Youtube or Twitter? If they are humans, who are they? Are they scholars, teachers, proselytizers, saints, sultans, or presidents? What kind of authority do they hold and how does it come to be formed? In attempting to answer these difficult questions, I argue that the formation of the Post-Prophetic Islamic religious authority hinges on the ability of an actor or a group of actors to articulate the *sunna* and constitute a *jamāʿa* that revolves around it. What we understand as Muslim religious authorities are precisely those actors who have taken the role of, and became recognized as, *connectors* between the *sunna* and their fellow Muslims. In other words, one does not connect the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* because one has authority. Rather, one becomes a religious authority because one is engaged in the work of connecting the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*.

Posited in this way, Islam becomes akin to coconut and date cultivation for two reasons. First it is a project of creating a growing social field involving available means. Secondly, what is contextually sown is something that is taken as being modeled on a common ancestor, while in actuality, it becomes a model for reconstructing the vanished common ancestor. Aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* therefore involves mutual calibration. The *sunna* after all is only the *sunna* when it becomes a normative standard for others, or when it is pragmatically reproduced in concrete interactions that make up the *jamāʿa*. In these processes, the role of the connectors becomes principal. We should therefore also ask how particular human actors become recognized as connectors and empowered to articulate the *sunna* and constitute the *jamāʿa*.

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The triangular relationship between the *sunna*, the *connectors*, and the *jamāʿa,* all of which are mutually implicated, calls for an approach to comprehend Islam as a historical and sociological reality that goes beyond the model of positing linear relations between the three constitutive elements. Long ago the anthropologist Gregory Bateson attempted to envisage such an approach through his adoption of cybernetic theories, arguing that "all that is required is that we ask not about the characteristic of lineal chains of cause and effect but about the characteristic of systems in which the chains of cause and effect are circular or more complex than circular" (1958: 288). Perhaps it demands a *trialectic* approach, along the line of what has been developed by Edward Soja, that posits each triangular relationship as an approximation that builds cumulatively on earlier approximations, thereby "producing a certain practical continuity of knowledge production" (1996: 61). In this dissertation, however, I adopt the simpler term of *social formation*, while opting for a more fluid definition of the term *social* — proposed by Bruno Latour — as

> a movement, a displacement, a transformation, a translation, an enrollment. It is an association between entities which are in no way recognizable as being social in the ordinary manner, *except* during the brief moment when they are reshuffled together… social … is the name of a type of momentary association which is characterized by the way it gathers together into new shapes. (2005: 64-5)

If social is by definition a formation, and as such, a momentary association, the question becomes what makes a particular social formation durable and growing, while others are liable to contraction and ephemerality. In fact if social formations are momentary associations in an ontological field of incessant becoming, then both momentary assemblages and those that endure need to be explained. This in turn opens up the question of politics, not only because a human social formation involves the question of leadership through its ability to empower actors

differentially, but also because it takes shape in an unequal world filled with multiple intersecting and overlapping formations, where limited resources — including material resources — limit or or shape social processes, and where "the unpredictability of resource accumulation," (Sewell 2005: 143) constantly imposes risk on its capacity to reproduce and endure.

In this dissertation, I argue that an Islamic social formation, or a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa,* is a product of an *articulatory project*. *Articulation* — as Louis Althusser (1970), and subsequently Stuart Hall (1980;1996) once suggested — carries a double meaning of uttering and speaking forth, on the one hand, and the form of the connection that can make a unity of two.[11] The notion of *articulation* was further developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe who suggest that articulation involves a qualitative transformation of the conjoint parts, in that "their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice" ([1985] 2001: 105). Articulating the *sunna* is by default expressing, arranging, and connecting it to other actors, objects, and space that in the process come to be a complex formation. Such a process involves "the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning" (*Ibid*: 113) between its constitutive and often contradictory parts, thereby allowing the entanglement and possible alignment of meaning. An Islamic social formation emerges through articulatory projects that calibrate its diverse constitutive elements. Such an approach allows us to see how a particular Islamic social formation — like Sufi orders or modern Islamic associations — can create alliances with other similar and dissimilar

[11] For Althusser and Etienne Balibar (1970), *articulation* is a relation that combines together laborers, means of production, and non-laborers, all of which form a particular *mode of production*. Thus productive forces and relations of production cannot be reduced either to inter-subjective human relations or to machines or quantifiable techniques. At the same time, such a conceptualization allows Althusser and Balibar to suggest a non-teleological reading of Marx, positing "a discontinuous succession of modes of production" (1970: 204). Hall in his turn critiques Althusser's positing of *articulation* as a process that produces variation between *invariant* elements. According to Hall (1980:329), while the concept has been useful in developing a more sophisticated understanding of modes of production, it can nevertheless be extended to understand other complex unity and social formations without reducing such relations to the level of the economic.

formations, including the state, by partially fixing meanings despite their pursuance of diverse and often conflicting projects. Articulatory projects are contingent by nature. They may become efficacious in some relational contexts, while simply failing to do so in others. The increasingly complex and plural social terrains in which such projects take place mean that power and efficacy are only realizable momentarily and relationally. Nonetheless, when a temporary efficacious bloc takes shape, it may produce results that endure long after the bloc itself disintegrates. The proliferation of actors, entanglements, and associations, their attempts to realize contrastive projects, and their deployments of contending discourses, ultimately means that the complete dominance of a social formation will remain an unachievable aspiration.

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Positing Islam as an ongoing project of articulating the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* allows us to break out from the long established contrastive dualism between an allegedly universal Islam and its vernacular variants. While this basic dualism has appeared and reappeared in different guises — global vs. local, universal vs. vernacular, orthodox vs. unorthodox, scriptural vs. traditional, urban vs. rural — the same basic assumption remains, that of positing the existence of an acultural, deterritorialized, and authentic Islam. This dualism was for a long time articulated through what the sociologist Robert Redfield (1956) defined as the reflective "great" tradition and the unreflective "little tradition." The first is posited as the major and continuing components of a religious tradition, while the latter is described as the imperfect appropriation of such a tradition at a local or village level. Such a dualism was reflected, for a long time, in the academic division of labour whereby the domain of Anthropology was limited to understanding the "little

tradition," leaving the study of the "great tradition," — i.e. Islamic texts, law, theology, and philosophy — to the Orientalists, historians, and textual scholars.

Clifford Geertz, in *Islam Observed* (1968), refashioned this dualism in term of mysticism/traditionalism and scripturalism, which in turn is mapped on a temporal framework, the former represented by pre-modern figures like Sidi Lahsen Lyusi and Sunan Kalijaga, and the later represented by modern figures like President Sukarno and Sultan Muhammad V. Key to this distinction in Geertz's view is the importance placed on the scriptures in Muslims' daily lives. Similarly, Ernest Gellner in *Muslim Society* (1981) reproduced the dualism in a spatial framework, in the juxtaposition between urban and rural Islam. Rural Islamic society revolves around the figures of saintly individuals and holy men who were able to serve as arbitrators between feuding tribes precisely because they embodied an authority independent of the segmentary kinship structure of the tribes. In contrast, "the Book", has shaped urban Islamic society. Scripturalism, in Gellner's view, was developed to answer the needs of the city dwellers and commercial sectors that needed a unified and written law to ensure the smooth operation of mercantile activities and the functioning of the state. If Geertz analyzed the symbolic universe of mystical and scripturalist Islam, Gellner was more interested in understanding how Islam is shaped and delimited by its socio-cultural contexts, and in turn helped societal structures to function.

An important intervention was made by Michael Gilsenan, who argues that Islam should not be considered as a monolithic "it," unchanging, and essentially "other." An anthropological approach to Islam should be concerned with "sociological questions of social and cultural variations in very different societies" (Gilsenan 1983: 5). As a result, anthropology of Islam

ought to “examine the practices and everyday lives of Muslims and the discourse of authority that are taken for granted or struggled over” (*Ibid*: 5). In Gilsenan’s view, Islam ought to be posited as

> not a single, rigidly bounded set of structures but rather as a world that identifies varying relations of practice, representation, symbol, concept and worldview within the same society and between different societies (*Ibid*: 19).

As such, anthropology of Islam ought to “situate some of these religious, cultural, and ideological forms and practices that people regard as Islamic in the life and development of their societies” (*Ibid*). Gilsenan suggests that no form of Islam may be excluded from the anthropologists’ interests on the basis that it is not true Islam. Nevertheless, as Talal Asad has pointed out in his critique of Gilsenan, such an approach does not help to identify Islam as an analytical object of study (Asad [1986] 2009). Such an approach, for instance, does not help us to understand the ongoing contestation over the term “knowledge” (*ʿilm*), particularly the attempt to restrict Islamic knowledge as the exclusive concerns of the *ʿulamāʾ,* which according to Franz Rosenthal, has been the central tension that characterizes Islamic history (Rosenthal 1970).

Historians of Islam have sketched complex portraits of Islamic societies that point to the weaknesses of Geertz’s and Gellner’s schematic models as well as Gilsenan’s loose definition of Islam. Jonathan Berkey (1992) in his study of the knowledge culture in medieval Cairo argues that Islamic piety and education took place alongside, and sometimes as a part of Sufi activities, public sermonizing, and popular religious celebration. Those who devoted themselves to textual education and scholarly pursuits did not necessarily see their efforts as something fundamentally distinct from public forms worship. While education did not obliterate segmentary boundaries, it did act as a leveler that rendered them porous and permeable, bringing together groups that

otherwise might have remained in their separated worlds. Vincent Cornell (1998), in his study of the history of Morrocan Sufism also proposed correctives to long-held assumptions about the nature of Islam in North Africa, suggesting that Moroccan Sufism (like Sufism everywhere) has an urban ethos, even in the countryside. Sainthood, insofar as it is articulated through Sufi doctrine, has been defined in terms of an urban-oriented "symbolic universe" (Cornell 1998: 93). The *murabit*, that quintessentially rural paradigm of Moroccan sainthood in ethnographic literature, was according to Cornell, a more complex figure than the "*marabout*" of French colonial scholarship. In early Moroccan Sufism, *murabit* was a technical term that denoted an actual formal relationship between the head of a socioreligious institution (the *ribāṭ*) and a particular tribe or group of tribes. Often, he was an urban-educated intellectual who actively translated Islam into terms that his pastoralist clients could understand and accept.

The recent works of Islamic historians — many of which cannot be discussed here — present a complex picture of Muslim societies in which dualism between great and little traditions has been constantly blurred by the ongoing forays of scholars into different territories and their communication with divergent regimes of knowledge. Muslim scholars have attempted to build bridges between the urban and the rural. They have utilized both scriptural and mystical languages, participated in assembling different Islamic social formations — whether the urban-based sultanates and Sufi orders, or the rural *ribāts* — and entered into ongoing negotiations with various actors. What these works highlight is the centrality of scholarly actors as *connectors*, who articulate the *sunna* by entering into negotiations with other social formations in their attempt to constitute a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa.* Through such actors, the *sunna* is defined and

reproduced in multiple ways — including but not limited to the scriptural and the mystical or their syntheses — and becomes entangled with diverse co[n]texts.

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In what has now become a classic essay, Talal Asad ([1986] 2009) offers an alternative research programme for an Anthropology of Islam, suggesting that Islam ought to be analyzed as a discursive tradition that includes and relates itself to the scriptures, as well as to the changing forms of social practice. Islam, according to Asad, is an instructive discourse that continually looks back to its history, scripture, and accumulated discourses to maintain its presence in the midst of present challenges, and to secure its future.[12] A tradition, according to Asad, "consists essentially of discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the *correct* form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history" (*Ibid:* 20). As such, anthropologists ought to examine the ways through which "Muslims are inducted *as* Muslims," and how authoritative practices are regulated, upheld, adjusted, and extended (*Ibid*: 21-22). Particularly important for Asad is the ways through which orthodoxy is established, while reminding that the term should not be understood as referring to a specific set of doctrines, but "a distinctive relationship — a relationship of power to truth" (*Ibid*: 22). As such,

> The way these powers are exercised, the conditions that make them possible (social, political, economic, et cetera), and the resistance they encounter (from Muslims and non-Muslims) are equally the concern of an anthropology of Islam, regardless of whether its direct object of research is in the city or in the countryside, in the present or in the past (*Ibid*: 22).

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[12] Asad's view of tradition is informed by what has become an influential definition of tradition offered by the philosopher Alasdair Macintyre:

> an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflicts: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and, those internal, interpretive debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted (MacIntyre 1988: 12).

The focus of an Anthropology of Islam should therefore be the mechanisms and processes through which certain inherited doctrines and practices — or I may add, doctrines and practices *posited to be inherited* — are produced, transmitted, contested, transformed, and made to cohere.

In the wake of Asad's intervention, there has been a number of important anthropological works that take "Islam as a discursive tradition" as its central concern (Mahmood 2005; Hirschkind 2006; Henkel 2005; Deeb 2006; Pandolfo 2007; Agrama 2012). Such works have shown the importance of taking religion seriously without reducing it to economic and political determinants. While these works deployed Asad's notion of Islam as a discursive tradition, they do not, in my view, attempt to work out and inquire further into the notion of discursive tradition. The fine and influential works of Saba Mahmood and Charles Hirschkind for instance, are more concerned with the disciplinary cultivation of piety and ethical dispositions, looking at Muslims who consciously and consistently aim to become pious and ethical subjects, the challenges they are facing, as well as the ways in which their practices pose a challenge to secular liberal normativity.[13] The turn to piety and ethics has helped us to recognize how Muslims' engagement with Islam is neither based on blind adherence nor on coercion, but on a creative process of realizing a particular notion of subjecthood and the good life.

Nevertheless, such a focus has the tendency to relegate as peripheral several important concerns that in my view should remain central to an Anthropology of Islam. First, there is the question regarding the notion of tradition itself, particularly its temporal dynamic, which was initially pinpointed by Asad but has since been left undeveloped, except in several notable

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[13] I agree with Samuli Schielke (2010) who suggests that the works of Asadian anthropologists of Islam like Mahmood and Hirschkind are more influenced by Asad's later works on religion and discipline (1993) and the complex relationship between religion and secularism (2003) than on his 1986 programmatic essay.

historical and anthropological works some of which are not necessarily influenced by Asad (Messick 1993; Florida 1995; Pandolfo 1997; Soares 2005; Ho 2006; Mittermaier 2011; Taneja 2012; Taneja 2013; Grehan 2014; Birchok 2015). Secondly, the centrality of social formation. Throughout Islamic history, scholars and other authoritative actors have been concerned with assembling and maintaining diverging figurations of the Islamic social body, perhaps more so than cultivating individual piety, which to some is deemed to be realizable only within the fold of an Islamic social body (Katz 2002).[14] Thirdly, there is the question of, and contestations over, authority and leadership of an Islamic social assemblage.[15] Finally, the "complex logic of lived experience" (Schielke 2010: 3), that is, the multiple and contradictory ideals and aspirations expressed by different actors; the complexity, ambiguity, and openness of everyday lives; and the tension between local, national, and global connections in which actors locate themselves in or are contingently entangled with.[16] These are the four matters of concerns that, in my view, should remain central to an anthropological study of Islam. Consequently, these four concerns will be developed in the course of this dissertation.

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[14] Indeed, piety tends to become secondary for many Muslim leaders, jurists, and other authorities, except perhaps for modern Muslim revivalists who happen to be the focus of Mahmood's and Hirschkind's ethnography. For many Sufi scholars, for instance, the notion of *adab* or virtuous relational conduct, has been stressed much more than piety.

[15] The usage of the English term 'piety' can also be rethought. In Indonesia, for instance, piety is usually translated as *kesalihan,* from the Arabic term *ṣalāḥ*. *Ṣalāḥ* is a multifaceted concept that represents the social and active dimension of Islamic ideal that brings into focus the praxis-oriented understanding of holiness in Islam (Cornell 1998: 30, 95-6). As a visible concept, *ṣalāḥ*, can be seen through those who embody it (*ṣāliḥ*), in their everyday life and their activity in the community. The paradigm is of course the Prophet himself who was seen to be not only a prophet but also a community leader. The *ṣāliḥ* then, provides the common measure by which Islamic authority can be recognized by the community. While one's authority over knowledge is recognizable to one's fellow scholars, *ṣalāḥ* becomes the way in which this authority is recognized in the broader public.

[16] One can certainly compare the works of Mahmood and Hirschkind to the more messy ethnographies of Muslims societies (Abu-Lughod [1986] 1996; Caton 1990; Caton 2005; Messick 1993; Ewing 1997; Soares 2005; Soares and Otayke 2007), in which Islam becomes one among the many problems that Muslims are actually facing in their everyday lives.

This dissertation is based on more than two years of fieldwork among Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs and other Indonesian Muslims, in particular, two contemporary Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Pekalongan: Habib Luthfi b. ʿAlī bin Yaḥyā and Habib Abdullah Bagir b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās, other local traditionalist Muslim scholars, as well as their respective overlapping *jamāʿas*. I examine the ways in which these *connectors* articulate the *sunna,* the concrete ways through which they cultivate their *jamāʿas,* their relationships to other Muslim and non-Muslim, state and non-state actors, as well as the various conflicts and contestations that have divided them. I begin, however, not with these contemporary actors but with historical Bā ʿAlawī and non-Bā ʿAlawī actors, both in Ḥaḍramawt and in Indonesia, to examine the various historically and geographically situated articulatory projects of connecting the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* which have resulted in different articulations of the *sunna,* diverging materialization of *jamāʿas* and diversified figurations of religious authority. This historical examination in turn helps us to make sense of the dynamics in contemporary Pekalongan, particularly the ways in which history and temporal continuity with the past become an important site of contemporary contention. This in turn points to the complex relationship between history, power, and authority (Foucault [1969] 2002; Trouillot 1995; Cohen 1994; Cohn 1995), as well as between history and space (Lefèbvre 1991; Harvey 2003; Berman 1983). Consequently, the dissertation is divided into two dialogical parts, historical and ethnographic, each consisting of four chapters.

Chapter one looks at several historical projects of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* in Ḥaḍramawt and Java that have been influential to my contemporary interlocutors. In particular, it examines saints and sultans as two similar, often interchangeable, but different forms of Islamic authority that emerged from different articulatory projects of assembling an Islamic

social formation. Chapter two investigates what subsequently became a dominant form of articulatory project pursued by Bā ʿAlawī scholars first instituted by an eighteenth century Bā ʿAlawī reformer ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād and his project of constituting a duplicable notion of *jamāʿa* by advocating individual responsibility and minimizing collective indeterminacy through the propagation of a common theological, ethical, and devotional code. The chapter further looks at how the Ḥaddādian paradigm was extended to Java through the works of traveling Ḥaḍramī scholars who assumed the role of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* to the Ḥaḍramī mercantile elites and their families. Chapter three probes into the constitutive make up of a *connector*, i.e. actors involved in the articulatory project of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* particularly those who are recognized as saints. Not all saints, however, are *connectors* in the technical sense of connecting the Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* as some actually can work against a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* by substituting the centrality of Prophetic authority with his own. Chapter four traces the emergence of the Bā ʿAlawī *Manṣabate* in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Java, a new Islamic social assemblage that resonates with a particular configuration of *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* that had historically developed in the tribal territories of Ḥaḍramawt. It also examines the emergence of a novel Islamic social assemblage, the *jamʿiyya* or modern voluntary association and modern schools founded on a quite different understanding of what constitutes the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* as compared to the Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* or the *manṣabate*.

A brief entr'acte bridges the historical part of the dissertation with the ethnographic. Chapter five follows the biographical becoming of Habib Luthfi, looking at how diverging genealogy and mobility are pivotal to the formation of different forms of Islamic religious

authority and social formation. Chapter six looks at how Habib Luthfi's adoption of the notion of *ṭarīqa* has allowed him to maintain, stabilize, and formalize his expanding *jamāʿa*. It argues that *ṭarīqa* is an ongoing project of reproducing networks into a durable, hierarchically-structured social formation that materializes as a social reality beyond the interpersonal encounters between its participants. The penultimate chapter examines several successful and failed *articulatory practices* between Habib Luthfi and institutions/actors instantiating the state, showing how Habib Luthfi's collaboration with the military has enabled him to further expand his *jamāʿa* into new areas and incorporate people from outside his *ṭarīqa* circle into his sphere of influence. Finally, chapter eight describes Habib Luthfi's discursive/textual, spatial, and ritual genealogical compositions that have allowed him to present himself as a lineal successor of an old but forgotten Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leadership in Java akin to a *manṣabate* — that of his own Bin Yaḥyā family — which at the same time is presented as intimately connected to the Javanese royal dynasty of Yogyakarta. Genealogical composition becomes efficacious when it is performed in orchestration with different actors — each with his/ her own role. As such, it is sustained by a web of social relations, which in turn subjects it to the risk of disintegration.

The bulk of the fieldwork was done in Pekalongan, Central Java. Pekalongan is situated on the north coast of Central Java along the main thoroughfare linking the national capital of Jakarta to the provincial capitals of Semarang (Central Java) and Surabaya (East Java). Pekalongan is an old seaport with a history dating back to the early twelfth century. Today, it is known primarily for its *batik* industry, hand-produced in small cottage industries or printed in large factories. It is also known for its traditional and modern shipyards as well as for fisheries and fish canning industry. As most regions in Indonesia, Pekalongan is divided into two different

governmental structures: the city (*kotamadya*) of Pekalongan headed by a mayor, and the regency (*kabupaten*) of Pekalongan headed by a regent (*bupati*). The mayor only presides over the city limit of Pekalongan, a considerably smaller territory (approximately 45 km^2) with a population of less than 300,000. The city is much more developed than the regency, being the location of major commercial centers and industries. The city is also home to a substantial Ḥaḍramī and Chinese population, most of whom are still living in the Arab and Chinese quarters (*kampung Arab* and *Pecinan*). The majority of the city's population are Muslims (278,453 out of the 290,870 total population). The regent, on the other hand presides over vast low and highlands that surround the city of Pekalongan (an area of approximately 836,13 km^2). There are 285 registered villages in the regency with a total population of 891,442. While mostly agricultural, the regency of Pekalongan has been rapidly expanding and developing industrial sectors. For almost two decades now, the regency has also developed its own administrative capital in Kajen, around twenty-five kilometers south of the city of Pekalongan. While generally, my research was accomplished through my engagements with the inhabitants of Pekalongan, I also benefitted from interactions with various non-local actors. The mobility of my major interlocutors, like Habib Luthfi, extends well beyond the spatial scope of Pekalongan, thereby motivating me to travel to various parts of Java, visit different localities, and meet other entangled actors. Such an approach puts into question the limitations imposed by the traditional anthropological frame of "the field" (Clifford 1997). The sphere of activities for many of my interlocutors extends far beyond what has been traditionally delimited as the field.

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Finally, I need to recognize my own background and my relation to my interlocutors. I am a Muslim and a Bā ʿAlawī, who was born in Indonesia. My own background makes this research an endeavor that is close and, to a certain degree, personal. I do believe, however, that the extended time I have spent outside of Indonesia since I was fourteen years old and the historical and anthropoligal training that I have experienced have created some measure of critical distance to the tradition and culture that I was born into. I am fully aware that the production of knowledge — particularly in the humanities and the social sciences — in Western Universities cannot be divorced from the identities of the researchers and the ways in which they formulate their research questions, and the question of insider vs. outsider has generated a long debate in the Western academy. At the same time, our increasingly globalized world has continued to produce complex interweavings of identities. More and more of anthropologists and historians today are "halfies," straddling two — or more — identity borders (Abu-Lughod 1991). Having said this, I strongly believe in the inherent weakness of a scholarly project that presupposes the existence of a single and complete story and its pretension to be able to recount such a story, whether it is produced by a stranger and distant observer or by an intimate or native analyst. The best anthropological research is one that maintains, rather than ignores or suspends, the tension between estrangement and intimacy and uses it to sketch a simultaneously objectifiable, personal, and incomplete picture of human sociality that "arises from within sociality" (Keane 2003: 243). Every story, including the one I am about to tell, is by definition incomplete, and the richest ethnographic portrait comes from assembling several stories that are themselves the results of intersubjective relations between the researchers and their interlocutors (Rabinow

[1977] 2007). If such a principle has now been accepted as axiomatic, then I have found solace in it.

Chapter I

Saints and Sultans

> Any man can carve tablets of stone, or bribe an oracle, claim a secret intercourse with some divinity, train a bird to whisper in his ear, or discover some other vulgar means of imposing himself on the people. A man who can do such things may conceivably bring together a company of fools, but he will never establish an empire, and his bizarre creation will perish with him. Worthless tricks may set up transitory bonds, but only wisdom makes lasting ones.
>
> -J.J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

Among the first acts that the Prophet Muḥammad accomplished following his migration from Mecca to Medina in 622 was the construction of a mosque, or a *masjid*, which literally means a place where one prostrates (*sajada*).[17] The act of building a mosque epitomized the sprouting of a new *jamāʿa*. A mosque is after all a site of worship and a gathering space that facilitates inter-personal sociality. Having a congregational mosque means that at least every Friday members of the *jamāʿa* — or at least the male half — can assemble and meet one another. Ideally they are supposed to congregate five times a day for the obligatory prayers. A mosque, however, is also a site of regimentation. Whilst praying, the *jamāʿa* is supposed to face one, and only one direction, that of the Kaaba, the stone cube edifice at the center of the Grand mosque of Mecca believed to be built by Abraham. The correct direction ought to be faced when praying is known as the

[17] Subsequently known as the *Masjid al-Nabawī* (the Prophet's mosque), the mosque is considered as the second holiest place by Muslims after the Grand Mosque of Mecca. After all it is within its enclosure that the Prophet lies buried. According to Islamic tradition, however, the *Masjid al-Nabawi* was not the first mosque founded by the Prophet. The first mosque was built in the outskirt of Medina, in a village called Qubāʾ. Some sources indicate that the the Qubāʾ mosque was built by the Prophet's companions who migrated from Mecca prior to the Prophet's own migration. Other sources claim that the Prophet himself founded the Qubāʾ mosque.

qibla.[18] Thus, every mosque is built in a way that the *miḥrāb*, the semicircular prayer niche where the imam stands as he leads the prayer, faces the *qibla.* Historically*,* determining the *qibla* of a mosque had been a central issue of concern and contention among Muslims. It had also stimulated the development of mathematical sciences and measuring instruments that could help to establish its precision*.* The mosque, in short, is a site that assembles and materializes a *jamāʿa* while regimenting its directional alignment to a fixed *qibla*.

Perhaps following the Prophetic model, the *wali sanga* — the nine saints attributed to be the earliest Islamic missionaries in Java — also built the grand mosque of Demak following the establishment of the first Islamic Sultanate in Java. Erected in 1498, the mosque served as a monument that "stand for, and to stand as basis for, Moslem kingship in Java" (Florida 1995: 321). One can also add that it is an edifice that serves as the site for the materialization of a new regimented *jamāʿa*. Assembling a new *jamāʿa* regimented towards a fixed *qibla,* however, is not as simple as it may sound. Any attempt of spatial and social regimentation can generate frictions. A nineteenth-century Javanese court annal*,* for instance, tells a story of the mosque's own resistance to the saints' attempt to regiment its *qibla* towards the Kaaba, which according to Nancy Florida, alludes to the historical difficulty that marked Java's Islamic conversion:

> The mosque nudged to right and left/ swinging to and fro from north to south/ still never came to rest. Then did the Lord Sunan Bonang and the First Among Kings [Sunan Giri]/ drawing in their breaths will the world condensed/ in a flash accomplished was the sovereign *wali*'s [saint] miracle/ Condensed the world was tiny/ And Mecca shone close by/ Allah's Ka'bah was nigh, manifest before them/ To estimate its distance but three

[18] Traditional Islamic sources describes how originally the *qibla* faced the *bayt al-maqdis* (the noble sanctuary) in Jerusalem. This was observed for thirteen years. Only seventeen months after the Prophet's migration to Medina, did he changed the *qibla* towards the Kaaba, following the revelation of verse 144 of the second Qurʾānic *sūra*. The changing of the *qibla* from Jerusalem to Mecca has been understood as a pivotal act that differentiated the Prophet's *jamāʿa* from the Medinan jews who prayed whilst facing Jerusalem. This reiterates the point that assembling a *jamāʿa* involves persistent acts of delineating it from other social formations, especially those with significant similarities, which in this case was other Abrahamic *jamāʿas* .

> miles off it loomed/ The Celibate Lord did beckon Sèh Malaya [an alias of Sunan Kalijaga], ware to the subtle sign/ Lord Sunan Kali [Jaga] rose to his feet/ From north he did face south/ One leg he did extend to side/ Both legs did stretch forth/ Long and tall, their stance astride/ His right foot reaching Mecca came just outside the fence of Allah's Ka'bah there/ His left foot did remain behind/ Planted to the northwest of the mosque/ Allah's Ka'bah did his right hand grasp/ His left hand having taken hold of the uppermost peak of the mosque/ Both of them he pulled/ Stretched out and brought to meet/ The Ka'bah's roof and the peak of the mosque/ Realized as one being were/ Perfectly straight strictly on mark (*Ibid*:167).

The two hands of Sunan Kalijaga coalesced the two structures *as one being*. The anecdote presents the miracle of Sunan Kalijaga as an act of mutual calibration, whereby both the spatial location of the Demak mosque and the Kaaba are modified in order to establish a perfect alignment between the two. The anecdote seems to suggest that a situated reproduction of the *qibla* may involve a reconfiguration of the *qibla* itself. At the same time it highlights the role of a connector who is responsible for the alignment. Sunan Kalijaga's ability to align the *qibla* in turn constituted — or at the least, reinforced — his spiritual authority.

In this chapter, I want to use the anecdote about the Demak mosque and the *qibla* to think about the dialectical relationship between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* Linking the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* is by no means a one way street. A project of assembling a new *jamāʿa* aligned to the *sunna* involves the pragmatic reproduction of the latter that makes it available as "objects for the senses" (Keane 2008: 114) for the congregating actors. Such a process often entails selection, redefinition, and reconfiguration of the *sunna* in light of the *jamāʿa*. To illustrate this dynamic, I look at several historical projects of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* in Ḥaḍramawt and Java. Note, however, that I limit my discussion to projects that I argue have influenced Habib Luthfi's contemporary project, which will be discussed more thoroughly from chapter four onwards. As such, examining these projects allows one to trace their resonances in Habib Luthfi's own

enterprise. More generally the examples discussed in this chapter provide illustrations of how the acts of (1) defining the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* and (2) establishing and maintaining the association between them, are historically and geographically situated. They further demonstrate how Islam — as a project of forming alignments, establishing associations, assembling connections, and delineating boundaries — is contingent and risky. As a growing assemblage, the boundary of a *jamāʿa* is porous to the influence of, and entanglements with, other ties, networks and itineraries that may subject it to the threat of dissolution and decay.

The *Murshid* and the *Ṭarīqa*

Let me return to the metaphor of date cultivation deployed by Habib Luthfi during his *kliwon* Friday gathering and discussed in the introduction: "As Indonesian Muslims, we should know how to plant (menanam) coconut, and not date palms." Despite being an Indonesian who was reared amid tall coconut palms and who, as a child growing up in the poverty-stricken post-independent Indonesia, used to make his own car toys from coconut husks, Habib Luthfi is certainly no stranger to date agriculture. Cultivating date palms was after all the pivotal economic activity of his Bā ʿAlawī ancestors following their migration to the Ḥaḍramawt valley of South Arabia. Growing up amongst the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan, Habib Luthfi was used to hearing stories of date palms and date cultivations told by the *wulayṭīs* as they romantically recalled their younger days in the Arabian Felix.[19] Perhaps his familiarity with both coconut and date palms was one reason for his preference for agricultural idioms.

[19] The term *wulayṭī* is used to refer to Ḥaḍramīs in Indonesia who were born in Ḥaḍramawt, as opposed to the *muwallad* who are born in the diaspora. Often time, the Hakka term *singkek* or *singkeh* which originally refers to first-generation Chinese migrant is also used for *wulayṭīs*. Unfortunately unlike Habib Luthfi's childhood days, by the time I did my fieldwork in Pekalongan only one *wulayṭī* was alive. He was in his early nineties.

The Bā ʿAlawī (children of ʿAlawī) is a *sayyid* (pl. *sāda*) lineage, meaning those who claim direct descent from the Prophet Muḥammad. They began to settle in Ḥaḍramawt in 319/931, with the arrival from Basra of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā (d. 344/956), the great-grandson of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d. 147/765), the sixth *imām* of the Shīʿīs.[20] Upon arriving in Ḥaḍramawt, Aḥmad — who was posthumously referred to as "the Emigrant" (*al-muhājir*), — and his descendants invested their wealth in agriculture, reviving barren lands and cultivating date-palm plantations. Such an agricultural project and their persistent retellings, as Engseng Ho has suggested, are highly significant, for

> they affirm that the sayyids brought value to Hadramawt; their immigration was not at the expense of locals. Cultivating date palms is a long-term project that requires start-up capital. From the time of planting, the trees may take up to fifteen years to bear fruit. In the meantime, farmers have to be paid to care for the trees and draw water for their irrigation. Once established, however, the trees are sturdy because their roots reach deeply into the ground. They withstand drought better than other species do, and they repay the initial investments for many years. Islamic law provides for ownership and usufruct rights to land that lies fallow; with conditions, rights may be given to those who cultivate the land. This procedure for establishing ownership of fallow land is provided for in legal manuals under the chapter head "Revivification of the Dead"… (Ho 2006: 39).

Reviving dead lands became a joint venture that forged sociality between the Bā ʿAlawī migrants and the Ḥaḍramī locals, while allowing the former to become landowners and job-providers. The entanglement between Prophetic genealogy, religious learning, and agricultural enterprise became the foundation of the Bā ʿAlawī religious authority for centuries to come. Indeed, their success in Ḥaḍramawt gave the Bā ʿAlawīs the ability to leave a homeland and reestablish

[20] Aḥmad the Emigrant left Iraq at a time when the ʿAbbasid caliphate (r. 132-923/750-1517), faced with numerous socio-political problems, was no longer able to control its far-flung provinces. Two insurrections in particular shocked the imperial heartland: the Zanj rebellion, in 255-70/869-83, a revolt of black slaves against ʿAbbasīd rule in southern Iraq, and the uprising of the Qarāmiṭa (sing., Qarmaṭī), a Shīʿī Ismāʿīlī group that challenged the ʿAbbasids in the desert of Iraq and Syria, established a utopian republic in eastern Arabia, and founded the Fāṭimid dynasty in the fourth/tenth century (Shihāb & Nūḥ 1980: 47-50).

themselves with more authority in other places, including Java, with more authority than many immigrants. Their religious authority in Ḥaḍramawt became a condition for the possibility of the kind of migration they undertake.

In the seventh/thirteenth century, a Bā ʿAlawī scholar, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (d. 653/1255) instituted his own Sufi tradition, what became known as the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya,* or *Ṭarīqat Sādat Banī ʿAlawī* (The way of the children of ʿAlawī).[21] Like other South Arabian Sufi brotherhoods, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* never became a fully institutionalized order. Rather, it remained an informal spiritual lineage built on family ties and sporadic master-disciple relationships (Knysh 2010). The name of the *ṭarīqa* itself seems to indicate that it was initially conceived as the familial religious tradition of the Bā ʿAlawī *sayyids*, many of whom were based in the city of Tarīm. Gradually, however, the *ṭarīqa* spread not only in the Ḥaḍramawt but also along the shores of the Indian Ocean, where the Bā ʿAlawī *sayyids* had settled, taking on various discursive and social shapes in different contexts.

In the writings of its early Tarīmī masters, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* is presented as an elite path of spiritual wayfaring (*sulūk*) that involves initiation or the establishment of a formal contract (*taḥkīm*) between a *murīd* (seeker/disciple) and a *murshid* (spiritual mentor).[22] Under the *murshid*'s direction, the *murīd* ascends one spiritual station (*maqām*) to the next, culminating in the highest station wherein the *murīd* develops intimacy with the divine and becomes endowed

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[21] Known posthumously as *al-faqīḥ al-muqaddam* (the paramount jurist) and *al-ustādh al-aʿẓām* (the greatest master), Muḥammad b. ʿAlī formed the *ṭarīqa* (Sufi tradition) by combining two spiritual genealogies: that of the Prophet's family (*ahl al-bayt*) handed down through the family and that of the renowned Sufi master of the Maghrib, Shuʿayb Abū Madyan (d. 549/1198) (Cornell 1996; Cornell 1998).

[22] This discussion is based on three early texts of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* written by Tarīmī Bā ʿAlawī scholars: *Al-Kibrit al-aḥmar wa al-iksīr al-akbar* (The Red Sulphur and the Great Elixir) of ʿAbdallāh b. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs (d. 865/1461); *Maʿārij al-hidāya* (The Ladders of Guidance) of ʿAlī b. Abū Bakr Sakrān (d. 895/1490), and the *Juzʾ al-laṭīf fī taḥkīm al-sharīf* (Subtle Section on the Noble Initiation) of Abū Bakr b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAydarūs (d. 918/1513). See: al-ʿAydarūs n.d.; al-Sakrān n.d.; al-ʿAydarūs n.d.

with gnosis (*maʿrifa*). Those who have reached such a state are usually referred to as a *walī Allāh*, friends of God, or saints. A *murīd* who had attain gnosis can then acts as a *murshid* who can cultivate the spiritual growth of a subsequent generation of *murīds*. The practical underpinning of the *ṭarīqa* is articulated in the doctrine of emulating the Prophet's *sunna*, both inwardly and outwardly, by emulating the *murshid*. As *murshids*, Bā ʿAlawī scholars became the living embodiments of the *sunna* for their disciples, just as the Prophet once did for his companions. Central to the *ṭarīqa* is therefore the basic assumption that contact with God is attainable through the Prophet, who in turn is accessible through his living descendants. The *ṭarīqa* was therefore conceived as a formalized *jamāʿa* made up of Bā ʿAlawī *murshids* and their disciples, the formers of whom were posited as embodying the Prophetic *sunna*. In this scheme, revolving around the *sunna* means revolving around and emulating the *murshids*.

The *tarīqa,* however, was not the only figuration of *jamāʿa* available in Ḥaḍramawt. Nor were the Bā ʿAlawī *murshids* the only actors who could connect the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Of considerable importance were the *mashāʾikh*, local Ḥaḍramī scholarly families that for long had been acknowledged as Islamic juristic authorities. While some of the *mashāʾikh* were amenable to the notion of a Sufi *ṭarīqa* — several even belonging to different *ṭarīqas* — others were more apprehensive. Many of the *mashāʾikh* stressed textual learning, especially in theology and Islamic law, as the preeminent means of establishing connection with Prophetic *sunna*. Textually learned jurists and theologians and not Sufi *murshids* were deemed to be the most reliable connectors between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Note however that Islamic law only deals with exterior *sunna*, *i.e.,* the acts of the Prophet and the rules established by him. It does not deal with the interior *sunna* that concerns psychological states and is emphasized by the Sufis. Prior to

instituting the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī himself was groomed to be a theologian and jurist by his *mashāʾikh* teacher, Shaykh ʿAlī Bā Marwān. It is said that when Bā Marwān learnt that his pupil had chosen to pursue Sufism, he was deeply disappointed and told him: "I wanted you to become a scholar like Ibn Furāk, and instead you chose Sufism and the life of a mendicant (*faqīr*)" (quoted in Balfaqih 1999: 21).[23]

The *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* thus emerged as an alternative elite *jamāʿa* — a fraternity perhaps is a more accurate term to describe the configuration of this *jamāʿa* — aligned to a particular articulation of the *sunna* through divergent works of mediation. If the *mashāʾikh* jurists opted for constituting a *jamāʿa* aligned to a textually-mediated *sunna*, the *ṭarīqa* posits Bā ʿAlawī *murshids* as the internal and external embodiments of the *sunna* around which an elite *jamāʿa* ought to emerge and orbit. Claiming direct descent from the Prophet, the Bā ʿAlawīs professed intimate knowledge of the *sunna* through a genealogy of knowledge transmitted internally through the family, from father to son, without external mediation. Their descent from the Prophet made the Bā ʿAlawīs his inheritors, superior to other claimants to his spiritual legacy. However, if the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* was an elite *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* that emerged in the urban center of Tarīm, how did the Bā ʿAlawīs extend their influence to other parts of Ḥaḍramawt? What kind of *jamāʿas* did they constitute? I will examine these questions in the next section.

The Saint and the *Ḥawṭa*

On one sunny day in May 2012, I found myself navigating through the narrow alleys of the Arab quarter of Surabaya, East Java. The winding pathways were overcrowded with merchants trying to sell various religious commodities, from prayer beads and mats to scarves and sarongs. The air

[23] Abu Bakr Ibn Furāk (d. 406/1015) was an eminent and influential theologian, jurist, orator, Arabic grammarian and *ḥadīth* scholar. His theological works are among the most important sources of Ashʿarite theology.

was infused with the sweet scent of incense burnt by shopkeepers selling non-alcoholic perfumes. A fiberglass canopy protected the passersby from the sweltering sun. Up ahead I could see the towering minaret of the Ampel mosque that housed the tomb of Sunan Ampel, one of the *wali sanga* or the nine saints credited as the earliest Islamic missionaries of Java. The saintly tomb has continued to draw thousand of pilgrims from across Indonesia and beyond, bursting the alleys leading to the mosque with unending shoppers and bystanders. A shopkeeper from whom I bought a poster depicting the *wali sanga* told me that the constant stream of pilgrims that makes local businesses thrive is a testament to the persisting spiritual potency of the deceased saint. Although long gone, the Sunan still provides for the livelihood of the locals, he said. His utterance reminded me of the close correlation between religious authority and the economy. Just as Aḥmad the Emigrant laid the foundation of the Bā ʿAlawī religious authority by cultivating barren lands and providing jobs for Ḥaḍramī locals, Sunan Ampel's hospitality continues to welcome pilgrims and ensures a thriving economy.

My destination that day was Jalan Sasak, a street adjoining the bazaar that for long has become a mecca for Muslim bibliophiles. Jalan Sasak is filled with bookshops selling all kinds of Islamic texts in Arabic, Javanese, and Indonesian. Students from the *pesantrens* (Islamic boarding schools) of East Java flock to the shops to purchase books assigned to them by their teachers. All kinds of Islamic texts are sold here, from medieval theological, exegetical, and juristic treatises to the works of modern Islamic revivalist authors. Books on Islamic medicine and magic were also prominently displayed. Jalan Sasak caters not only to Muslims of different religious orientations, but also of different classes by selling books of different qualities, ranging

from the expensive leather-bound books imported from Cairo and Beirut to cheap lithographic looseleafs with often illegible prints produced by local publishing houses.

Entering one of the bookshops, I inquired for books on the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya.* The seller handed me a book in Indonesian, entitled *Biografi Ulama Hadramaut* (Biography of Ḥaḍramī scholars), written by a contemporary Bā ʿAlawī scholar, Abubakar al-Masyhur (b. 1943). He told me that the book had just come out and sales had been good. Browsing through the book I came upon a description of an early Bā ʿAlawī scholar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ (d. 556/1161), which clearly illustrates the process by which a Tarīmī Bā ʿAlawī scholar constituted a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* outside the urban centers.[24] Muḥammad is known as Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ (The Principal of Mirbāṭ) because he moved from Ḥaḍramawt to Mirbāṭ, a cape settlement on the Indian Ocean coast in present-day Oman where his tomb remains an object of pious visitation:

> It is said that Muḥammad b. ʿAlī was oriented towards work and the acquisition of permissible fortune (*rizqi halal*). He always motivated others to harrow the wealth of the earth through agriculture and plow the wealth of knowledge through reading and writing. For that reason he used to go out from Bayt Jubayr with his family to supervise the planting of dates, seeds, and vegetables. He expanded his property so that he could employ more workers and generate more profits. The Imam was very observant of the planting seasons. He prepared granaries in Tarīm and Bayt Jubayr that are filled with fruits and seeds. This increased his profits annually. It is said that when he was about to go to Bayt Jubayr for the harvesting season, the women cleaned the leftover seeds from his granaries. When those leftover seeds were gathered, they amounted to between forty to eighty *qahawil,* or around ten *mudd*.[25] Aside from engaging in agriculture, he was also active in the trade of agricultural produce. He sold them in the main road that connected Ḥaḍramawt and Dhofar [present-day Oman]. He used to traverse the coast of Dhofar for *daʿwa* or leisure, whilst bringing goods for trade. Sometimes he went with his children and stayed in Dhofar for several months. There, he became known to the locals from all walks of life. He was pivotal to the spread of the legal school of Imam Shāfiʿī in Mahra and the surrounding regions, until he became respected and revered by the tribes of Mahra and Dhofar. Trade caravans from Bayt Jubayr would only go to Dhofar together

[24] For another perspective on Muḥammad Ṣāhib Mirbāt, see: Knysh 1999.

[25] 1 *mudd* is approximately 544 grams or 0.6875 liters.

> with the Imam, knowing that in his presence, they would not be disturbed by the tribesmen, the beduins, and the soldiers. In Dhofar he organized study circles and issued *fatwas*. He was the person who brought Sunni theology to Dhofar… He turned the people of Dhofar to become the people of the *sunna* (*ahlu sunna*) just like the people of Ḥaḍramawt. In doing so, he followed the footstep of his ancestor the Emigrant. If the Emigrant spread the legal school of Imam Shāfiʿī in Ḥaḍramawt, Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ spread this school in Dhofar. If the Emigrant emigrated from Basra to Ḥaḍramawt, Ṣāhib Mirbāṭ emigrated from Ḥaḍramawt to Dhofar… al-Imam al-Ḥaddād described him in one of his poem:
>
> Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ was a perfect exemplar
> From him descended all of the exemplars
> They are the inheritors of the Prophet, and his party
> And his sons, even for those who pretend to be blind. (al-Masyhur 2011: 51-4)

Observe the intertwining between genealogy, religious learning, mobility, and agricultural enterprise. The hagiographical account presents the combinations of these four elements as what enabled Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ to become a recognized religious authority in both Ḥaḍramawt and Dhofar. He is portrayed as a successful landowner, charismatic planter, and traveling merchant. His travels enabled him to forge connections with local tribes, which in turn, enabled him to connect them to the *sunna* as codified in the Shāfiʿī legal school. In doing so he made these tribes into his *jamāʿa*, or a *jamāʿa* that revolved around his authority as living connector. The clearest articulation of his authority amongst the Dhofari tribes was his ability to become what is known under tribal custom as a *siyar,* or safety guarantor for other travelers and merchants who sought safe passages through tribal territories. It remains unclear, however, as to how he mediated the *sunna*. Did he teach them using particular texts, or did he simply present himself as a living embodiment of the *sunna* which the tribesmen could emulate.

Hagiographical sources retrospectively display a pattern in the formation of Bā ʿAlawī religious authority — which is visible in the cases of both the Emigrant and Ṣāḥib Mirbāṭ — involving migration to a new territory, agricultural enterprise, proselytization, and establishing

ties with the locals, all of which enabled them to form new settlements and constitute new *jamāʿas*. Such a pattern was also evident in the accounts of Bā ʿAlawī scholars of later generations. Thus Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAydarūs (d. 986/1578) founded the sovereign settlement of Thibī, Abū Bakr b. Sālim (d. 992/1584) in ʿInāt, and ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1071/1661) in Ḥurayḍa (Ho 2006; al-Ḥāmid n.d.; Arai 2004). These settlements were declared *ḥawṭas* or sacred sanctuaries established through agreements between the migrating scholars and the tribes that reign over the territory. Such agreements stipulate that both parties guarantee the spiritual and temporal protection of the *ḥawṭas* and their inhabitants, thereby ensuring the security of these sacred sanctuaries. Arms and violence were strictly prohibited in the *ḥawṭas*. The tribes' acceptance of the authority of these Bā ʿAlawī scholars was propelled, as Evans-Pritchard has shown in the case of the Sanusiya of Cyrenaica, by their need for some authority "lying outside their segmentary tribal system which could compose intertribal and intersectional disputes" (1949:88). The security brought about by the agreement also enabled the Bā ʿAlawīs to invest in new plantations and allowed market to take place.[26]

Upon the death of a *ḥawṭa*'s founder, his hereditary successor — which is referred to by the term *manṣab* — established an annual commemoration (*ziyāra*), using the occasion to further

[26] The idea of a sacred sanctuary is one that can be found in different parts of the Muslim world. Some scholars, most notably Eric Wolf, even go further in identifying the idea with the genesis of Islam itself (Wolf 1951; Serjeant 1962; Donner 2010; Munt 2014). Robert Serjeant explains that

> in a society where war is the norm of existence, a neutral territory is a necessity for reasons religious, political, and economic. The *ḥawṭah* is such an area, often situated at a natural road junction, where tribes meet, perhaps an important market. A saint, it is often recorded, in his own lifetime will demarcate a *ḥawṭah* with whitewashed pillars. After death his holiness and power are embodied in his tomb, now become a sanctuary, which his successor, known as *Manṣab*, and his posterity administer. The essential political factor herein is that the saint induces the tribes or [in Islamic times] *sulṭāns* to contract agreements with him to maintain the inviolability of the *ḥawṭah* and define penalties for its infringement. (Serjeant 1957: 14-15).

Ḥawṭas are therefore similar to the congeries of burgs of Central and Western Europe (also known as burgh in Scotland), in that independent towns are legally carved out of a wider country becoming islands of sovereignty. In West Africa such spaces begun as a Qurʾān school farm which gradually develop into extensive clerical compounds and became off-limit to temporal authorities and exempted from taxation (Ware 2014:97-8).

facilitate market and negotiate peace settlements between warring tribes (Ho 2006; Bujra 1971). At the same time, the spiritual power of the *ḥawṭa*'s founder — believed to be stronger after their deaths — became the foundation upon which their descendants established their religious and political influence over their *jamāʿas*.[27] Not unlike what the shopkeeper in the Arab quarter of Surabaya told me — albeit in a much modest scale — these charismatic planters facilitated thriving economy during their lives and posthumously. There is a close correlation between religious authority, the constitution of a *jamāʿa* and economic enterprise in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Ḥaḍramawt as in the present day Java.

Hagiographical sources portray how these charismatic planters were preoccupied with giving religious instructions to the townsmen and members of the adjacent tribes while establishing new religious rituals. Proselytizing activities usually began prior to their decision to settle in the areas. Kazuhiro Arai, in his study of ʿUmar al-ʿAṭṭās, shows how the scholar has frequented the ʿAmd and Dawʿān valleys to proselytize among the tribesmen and gaining followers before finally settling in Ḥurayḍa and declaring it as a *ḥawṭa* (2004: 23). After all, the formation of a *ḥawṭa* hinges on the consent of the reigning and often conflicting local tribes to become a *jamāʿa* under the spiritual authority of the BāʿAlawī scholar. Upon declaring a *ḥawṭa*, the scholar usually demarcate his territory with whitewashed pillars (Serjeant 1957: 14) before building more permanent religious infrastructures such as mosques or schools and cultivating plantations. Hagiographical sources illustrate how these charismatic planters set themselves as exemplars, as living embodiments of the Prophetic *sunna* from whom the newly formed inter-

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[27] Drawing on the work of the late Bā ʿAlawī scholar Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Shāṭirī (d. 1422/2001), Kazuhiro Arai discusses the role of the *manṣab* as "the source of authority for crucial matters and social problems (*al-marjaʿ fī al-umūr al-hamma wa al-mashākil al-ijtimaʿiyya*). A *manṣab* is responsible for "1. removing enmity (*iṣlaḥ dhat al-bayn*), 2. guiding the ignorant and propagating the principles of Islam (*irshad al-juhhāl wa al-qiyām bi-nashr al-mabādiʾ al-islāmiyya*), and, 3. entertaining guests (*qirām al-dhayf*). See: Arai 2004: 72.

tribal and mostly illiterate *jamāʿas* could learn from, especially at the time when access to textual materials was not readily available.

Perhaps one ethnographic example can help to illustrate how these Bā ʿAlawī scholars transmitted the *sunna* to their tribal *jamāʿas.* In 2006, I visited the mausoleum of ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1914) in Seiyun, Ḥaḍramawt. Every monday night, the *manṣab* — who was al-Ḥabashī's great-grandson — leads the ritual of *ḥaḍra* at the mausoleum. The two hour ritual consisted of recitation and singing of al-Ḥabashī's poems, some of which were accompanied by drumming. Before the *manṣab* concluded the ritual with the final supplication, he led the congregation to collectively recite what they usually recite during *ṣalāt* (Muslim prayer), beginning with the intention, the inaugural *takbīr*, the opening prayer, the *fatīḥa*, all the way to the final *salām*, all of which were recited whilst they were sitting and facing the tomb rather than the *qibla*. I had never seen such a practice except in Indonesian primary schools when teachers teach their students how to memorize verses, phrases, and prayers recited in a *ṣalāt*. Following the ritual, I asked the *manṣab* about this particular practice. He told me that in the olden days, Bā ʿAlawī scholars had to teach illiterate tribesmen how to pray in accordance to the *sunna*, including helping them to recite the obligatory invocations. So they held recitations of poems and drumming to attract tribesmen and used the occasion to teach them what to recite during *ṣalāt*. When I asked the *manṣab* why the practice still continues when most people already know how to pray, he responded that such a practice is the *sunnat salaf* (the *sunna* of the predecessor) and as such, it is his duty as a *manṣab* to maintain ritual regularity.[28] The *manṣab*

[28] Another term that is often used interchangeably with *sunnat salaf* is *sunnat al-walī*, the *sunna* of the saint.

further told me how the practice has of late been criticized by local Salafi preachers, who describe him as “leading his *jamāʿa* to pray to a tomb rather than to God”.

Note, however, how the *manṣab* used the term *sunnat salaf* to describe the practice. While the invocations recited by the *jamāʿa* were initially taught by the Prophet and as such comprise the Prophetic *sunna*, the practice of reciting them whilst sitting in a congregation during the ritual of *ḥaḍra* is the *sunna* of ʿAlī al-Ḥabashī and was initially devised to instruct his tribal *jamāʿa*. This practice can be described as a *sunna* precisely because it is aligned iconically to the Prophetic *sunna* and pragmatically to a particular tribal *jamāʿa*. This example shows how on retrospect, the foundation of *ḥawṭas* under the leadership of the Bā ʿAlawī scholars can be perceived as a project of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* that revolved around their own personalities as living embodiments of the *sunna* and their ability to introduce ritual innovations — deemed reprehensible by the Salafis — that could facilitate the reproduction of the *sunna*. Such ritual innovations were subsequently understood as the *sunna* of the predecessors, regularly maintained by the *manṣab* and observed by his *jamāʿa*.

Aside from transmitting and reproducing the *sunna,* the ability of the Bā ʿAlawī scholars to provide hospitality was another vital aspect that enabled them to form an inter-tribal *jamāʿa*. Here lies the importance of wealth and agricultural enterprise. As arbitrators of the surrounding tribes, the *ḥawṭa*’s founders and their successors had to spend their wealth for the often long and expensive peace negotiations. This involved providing hospitalities for each of the disputing parties, as well as inviting them both to joint feasts. They also had to provide room and board for visitors, pilgrims, and travelers, as well as other scholars and *manṣabs*. The hagiography of the founder of the *ḥawṭa* of ʿInāt, Abū Bakr b. Sālim (d. 992/1584), portrays his kitchen as baking a

thousand loaves of bread for the poor, not including the food prepared for his numerous guests (al-Ḥāmid n.d.). The notion of *karam* (generosity), central to the Arabian tribal ideology, also became pivotal to the formation of religious authority in the tribal hinterlands. To be recognized by the tribes, the *ḥawṭas*' founders and their descendants had to equal or exceed the generosity exhibited by the tribal chiefs. This is why, as Evans-Pritchard noted in the case of the Sanusiya, "the fakiristic exhibitions of some of the [Sufi] Orders, so dear to the common man in the towns, were uncongenial, even repellent, to the Bedouin…" (1949: 88). Constituting a *jamāʿa* can indeed be an expensive enterprise.

Aside from exhibiting *karam*, becoming a religious authority that reigns over a *ḥawṭa* also involves the ability to supersede previous authorities recognized by the town and tribesmen. Such a shift was usually enabled by the claimant's ability to perform miraculous acts. Arai recounts how ʿUmar al-ʿAṭṭās' religious authority in Ḥurayḍa replaced the authority of the *mashāʾikh* al-ʿAfīf family:

> ʿUmar's migration to Hurayda can be interpreted as the expansion of [Bā ʿAlawī] *sada*'s influence into Wadi ʿAmd, which theretofore had been the stronghold of the *mashaʾikh* class. Before ʿUmar's arrival, the people of Hurayda went for advice and assistance to the al-ʿAfif family in al-Hajaryn, a village in Wadi Dawʿan. According to an anecdote, one day, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Rahman, who was not famous yet, had a conversation with ʿAbd Allah b. Ahmad al-ʿAfif, a famous *waliy* who visited Hurayda to pray for rain. ʿUmar told him that he had just come to the town. On hearing this, ʿAbd Allah al-ʿAfif stopped visiting Hurayda on account of ʿUmar's presence in that town. One day, ʿUmar cured a person who could not walk by striking his back. Because of this miracle, he acquired a high status among the locals. Since then, the al-ʿAttas family has been acting as the almost sole religious authority in the town (Arai 2004: 25).

The triumph of a new religious authority simultaneously hinges on tapping into the inroads of previous authorities and his ability to supersede them.[29]

In these tribal territories, a distinct understanding of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* emerged, which found its most vivid expression in the cult of the *ḥawṭa*'s founders (Knysh 1993). Here, the term *maqām* did not refer simply to the saints' spiritual station — as it is explained in the writings of the Tarīmī *murshids* — but also to the spatial realm of their spiritual authorities. For the tribesmen, their *wilāya* (sainthood) was evidenced by their miraculous abilities as rain makers, healers, and warders of evils. Oftentimes, the ability to perform miracles decenters their role as religious instructors. A hagiographical anecdote relating to the aforementioned ʿUmar al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1071/1661), succinctly describes this dynamic. One day, al-ʿAṭṭās' pupil, ʿAlī b. ʿAbdallāh Bā Rās asked his master:

> "Master, you often travel to these valleys, but no one benefits from your presence" (*lam yantafiʿ bika aḥad*). He (al-ʿAṭṭās) replied: "O ʿAlī, if only they see me with the eyes through which you see me, I will bring them to Allāh in an instant (*la awṣalathum ilā Allāh fī laḥḍa*). Unfortunately, they do not utter a word except for '*Ḥabīb* comes' and '*Ḥabīb* goes.' Even if there were some of them who came to me, it is because they were asking me to supplicate for rain or to ask Allāh to give them children." (al-Ḥabashī 1979: 9)

Among the tribesmen, the ability to cure or perform miracles seems to be an important prerequisite for the acceptance of their religious authority. The authority of the Bā ʿAlawī

[29] In the same manner Evans-Pritchard writes:

> long centuries before the Grand Sanusi began his mission in Cyrenaica, the Bedouin were used to the sight of an *ʿalim*, a learned man — for anyone who can read and write is a learned man to the Bedouin — coming from the west to heal their children and beasts, break droughts, write talismans, and teach them the beliefs and law of Islam… The Bedouin of Cyrenaica owe much to these holy men, for, ignorant and superstitious though they may have been, they taught the tribesmen to respect learning and religion and kept those twin lights burning, even if dimply, through centuries. The Bedouin do not forget them, or to say a prayer for them, when they pass their tombs; and they have given the freedom of their earth and water to their descendants. Without these forerunners the Grand Sanusi could not have planted his Order in the country. It is planted in their bones (1949: 68).

scholars as connectors between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* was premised on their ability to act as connectors between the *jamāʿa* and divine grace and power.

The anecdote above, however, also illustrates how despite their preoccupation with their tribal *jamāʿas*, the *ḥawṭa*'s founders also acted as spiritual mentors to elite disciples. The kind of educational relationship that developed between them was one that is usually described in Sufi circles as *suḥba,* or companionship whereby a *murīd* lives with and serves a *murshid* for a protracted amount of time. Such a relationship stresses less the mastery of texts and more acquiring a set of dispositions by emulating a living exemplar, a practice akin to what the Ancient Greeks referred to as *paideia*. Rather than learning *ḥadīth* texts that encapsulate Prophetic *sunna*, a disciple takes his/her master as the embodiment of the *sunna,* thereby enacting a relationship similar to that between the Prophet during his lifetime and his companions. There is an anecdote repeatedly told to me by different people on several occasions during my fieldwork in Pekalongan regarding the aforementioned ʿUmar al-ʿAṭṭās and his disciple, ʿAlī Bā Rās. Whilst the story was related in the context of explaining to me the need to maintain positive thoughts or good opinions (*ḥusn al-ẓann*) of the saints, it nevertheless also illustrates the kind of educational relationship that emerged in the *ḥawṭas*. The anecdote roughly goes like this:

> Shaykh ʿAlī Bā Rās lived with and served Ḥabīb ʿUmar for an extended amount of time. Whenever he wanted to read a book, however, Ḥabīb ʿUmar would instruct him to do menial work: cleaning the toilet, filling water jugs, preparing food and drinks. Whenever Ḥabīb ʿUmar gives a lecture to an audience, Shaykh ʿAlī was not permitted to sit and listen. He was ordered to prepare the incense or tea for the audience. Shaykh ʿAlī remained obedient, but he gradually developed negative thought (*ḥusn al-ẓann*) towards his teacher. "Perhaps he only wants to enslave me rather than properly educate me," he said to himself. Ḥabīb ʿUmar understood the thoughts that crossed his disciple's mind. Later on that evening, when no one was around, Ḥabīb ʿUmar called Shaykh

> ʿAlī and bestowed upon him an *ijāza* (permit to teach) for all branches of knowledge. Shaykh ʿAlī was shocked. He asked his teacher, "how could I teach, when I have no knowledge". Habib ʿUmar then instructed him to open the books stored in the library. Shaykh ʿAlī was even more surprised as he miraculously knew by heart the contents of these books. Thereupon Ḥabīb ʿUmar told him, "you have now become my scholarly peer, and thus can no longer serve me. Leave now, as our *ṣuḥba* (companionship) has come to an end".

These two anecdotes should restrain us from positing a hasty and unqualified polarity between the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* that took shape in urban centers like Tarīm and those that emerged in the tribal territories. Certainly there were differences in the configuration of the *jamāʿa*, but there were also similarities, especially because apart from dealing with the tribesmen, these *ḥawṭa* founders also had elite disciples whose spiritual growth they personally supervised.

Assembling a *jamāʿa* in tribal territories means continuously maintaining rituals, visiting the constituents and providing pastoral care, resolving conflicts, and extending hospitality. At the same time a *ḥawṭa*'s founder had to face intermittent criticism, either from his own *jamāʿa* or from outsiders. One recurrent source of criticism had to do with the relationship between their religious authority and their economic enterprise. One anecdote that illustrates this point comes from a manuscript in the possession of the current *manṣab* of Pekalongan (more on him in chapter 4) that tells the story of al-Ḥusayn b. Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālīm (d. 1044/1634), the son and successor of the aforementioned saintly founder of the *ḥawṭa* of ʿInāt:

> Our master Ḥusayn b. Abū Bakr was among those who all things submitted and served him. He was bestowed wealth [by God] that had never been received by his predecessors. It is said that he had seven hundred horses that he kept in a place called Mankhub in the ʿAmd valley. A man criticized him saying, "you love the world". He responded to the man "no, it is the world that falls in love with me." He used to export dates from his plantation to Basra. Once, his shipment arrived during an epidemic. When the people of Basra heard that a shipment of Ḥabīb Ḥusayn dates had arrived, they all rushed to buy them with the intention of seeking blessing and cure. As demand increased, the price rocketed. One date was sold at one dinar. When the sale report

> reached Ḥabīb Ḥusayn, he called the man [who criticized him] and said, "did not I tell you that the world loves me?". One day a man who attended his gathering said in his heart, "how can such a wealthy man remember God". Our master Ḥusayn read through his mind and said to him, "if all this wealth that you see vanishes, it will not have the slightest effect on me" (Bā Fadhl n.d.: II, 281).

While the agricultural enterprise and wealth that enabled the extension of hospitality were constitutive of religious authority in the tribal territories, they could also become a basis for criticism. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, the confluence of wealth and religious authority remains a contested issue that can simultaneously generate admiration and scorn.

How then can one characterize the form of the Bā ʿAlawī religious authority that developed during their expansion within the Ḥaḍramawt valley through the establishment of *ḥawṭas* in the tribal territories? Writing in the early twentieth century, the *irshādī* (on this organization, see chapter 4) historian Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī criticized the Bā ʿAlawīs for establishing what he described as *sulṭa rūhiyya* (spiritual power). In al-Bakrī's view, such a power was created not through force or military might, but through showcasing piety and claiming descent from the Prophet's family (1936: II, 118). Such authority enabled the Bā ʿAlawī to exercise political power among Ḥaḍramī tribes. Thus each Bā ʿAlawī family exercises power over a particular Ḥaḍramī tribe, like "the āl-Shaykh Abī Bakr over the Yāfiʿ, the āl-ʿAydarūs over the al-Kathīr, and the al-ʿAṭṭās over the al-Jaʿdah" (*Ibid*: II, 118).[30] Al-Bakrī also described how the Bā ʿAlawī spiritual power was instantiated in everyday practices including in the special sitting

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[30] Under the subheading of *al-khurafāt*, or superstitions, al-Bakrī (1936: II, 119-120) describes several ways through which the Bā ʿAlawīs have historically built their socially-recognized spiritual authority. First, they built the physical structures of saintly mausoleums as the material symbols of their authority, followed by the discursive acts of inviting people to visit the mausoleums and to seek blessing there. Then al-Bakrī discussed the ritual behaviors exhibited by people at these devotional sites. Finally, he identified the role of the Bā ʿAlawī hagiographies in reproducing a particular image of the Bā ʿAlawīs as saints and possessors of spiritual power.

arrangements reserved for them in rituals and gatherings, the prescribed acts of kissing their hands, and their practice of not marrying their womenfolk to others.

Despite its polemical nature and the failure of its author to appreciate the importance of wealth and agricultural enterprise to the formation of Bā ʿAlawī religious authority, al-Bakrī's discussion in *Tārīkh ḥaḍramawt al-siyāsī* (Political History of Ḥaḍramawt) sheds light on one crucial feature of their project. That is, in discussing the alignments between different Bā ʿAlawī families and Ḥaḍramī tribes, al-Bakrī actually illustrates how the former's expansion into tribal hinterlands and their establishments of *ḥawṭas* generated multiple tribal *jamāʿas* that revolved around their respective religious authorities. Each tribe only adhered to the teaching of its particular religious authority. I have noted how the *ḥawṭa*'s founders presented themselves as the embodiments of the *sunna*. They laid down their own specific teachings and practices that were born out of pragmatic negotiations with their *jamāʿas*, and were subsequently institutionalized and maintained by their hereditary successors. What this points to is precisely the development of multiple localized *jamāʿās* that revolved around particular and contextualized articulations of Prophetic *sunna* as embodied by the charismatic planters and their hereditary successors.

The project of constituting a new *jamāʿā* aligned to the *sunna* therefore involves a situated redefinition and reconfiguration of the *sunna.* It requires mutual calibration, whereby not only the *jamāʿa* is subjected to the Prophetic *sunna,* but also the latter is reconfigured to suit the needs and demands of the former. One result of this is the emergence of multiple connectors and multiple articulations of the *sunna*. Whilst rejected by modernist readings of Islam, such dynamics can still be found in different parts of the Muslim world. In the Comoros Island, for instance, Michael Lambek observes how in order to exercise a degree of authority over their

jamāʿas, the *fundi* (local Islamic scholars) had to master not only Islamic knowledge (*ʿilim fakihi*) but also other ideological systems operating in their localities including astronomy (*ʿilim dunia*) and spirit possession (*ʿilim ny lulu*) (1993: 189-90). Similarly, Dale Eickleman shows that in Morocco, a *qāḍī* (Islamic judge) has to master local customs and tribal genealogies in order for his authority to be accepted. Eickleman documents how at times, the ruling of a *qadhi* is rejected by his tribal *jamāʿa* on account of their being too distinct from the *ʿurf* (tribal custom) (1985: 28-34). These cases illustrate how projects of aligning *sunna* and *jamāʿa* and the forms of religious authority they generate, do not solely rest on erudition in Islamic sciences but also on the scholars' ability to negotiate with their local regimes of knowledge. Such projects also exemplify what Robert Hefner has described as the dialectic between "conservation" and "relevance" that lies at the heart of the Islamic scholarly enterprise (Hefner 2007).

In this section, I have described one particular form of religious authority exhibited by the *ḥawṭa*'s founders and their hereditary successors, the *manṣabs*. I have shown how their project of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* resulted in the assembling of a particular social formation, that of the *ḥawṭa*. Such sanctuaries instantiated distinct sociopolitical orders based on alternative frameworks of allegiance, identity, and moral order. Historically, they have the ability to provide safe havens for political dissidents, which can render them as potentially subversive to the reigning political authority.

In Java, a social formation that can be compared to the *ḥawṭa* was that of the *perdikan* or free villages. *Perdikan* status was created by the royal decree (*piagem*) of a Javanese ruler to villages or people whom they considered to be deserving in religious matters, such as Muslim scholars who established a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). Such a privilege was said to be

accorded to religious communities in the pre-Islamic period (Kumar 1985: 42). Some villages are declared as *perdikan* due to the existence of saintly graves within its vicinity. These villages were exempted from taxes and compulsory labor but were expected to watch over royal or saintly graves and provide Islamic education. According to Ann Kumar, the *perdikans* were distinguished from ordinary villages

> by their manners and morals (according to Dutch observes, by a 'holier-than-thou' attitude) and often enforced prohibitions on the enjoyment of, for instance, *wayang and gamelan*; some even proscribed common objects and actions not usually considered offensive to Islamic law or morality (1985: 42).

The Dutch maintained the status and privileges of the *perdikan* up to 1874, when the colonial government deemed them to be states within the state and reverted their status back into ordinary villages (Fauzia 2013: 120). Prior to the intrusion of the Dutch colonial state, however, these autonomous *perdikans* had sometimes tumultuous relationship with another Islamic assemblage that instantiated a different form of political authority, namely the *kraton* (royal court). In the next section I turn to pre-colonial and colonial Java to look at the Islamic *kraton* as a social formation that took shape out of a particular project of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.*

The Sultan and the *Kraton*

The evening air was dense as I sat in the third row of the packed and steaming modest auditorium of Unikal, Pekalongan's only but fully functioning university. Founded in 1980 by the then attorney-general of Indonesia, the small university comprises several schools, the most famous of which is its school of fisheries. For a town where fisheries have a continuing importance to local economy, having a modern and nationally-acclaimed school of fisheries is a source of pride. My visit to the university, however, was not to inspect that particular school.

Rather, I was attending the premier of a student production of *Mangir*, a play written by the great modern left-wing Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer (d. 2006).

Mas Didi was the drama instructor. A native of Pekalongan, the forty-five year old had returned to his hometown several years ago after living in Yogyakarta since his college days. In that Sultanic city, Mas Didi was involved with several theatrical troupes. Bemoaning the state of the literary and art scene in Pekalongan, he decided to return home and teach performing arts and literature to Unikal students. The idea of staging *Mangir* was his.

Based on Javanese court chronicles, *Mangir* tells the history of the political conflict between the autonomous *perdikan* of Mangir and the rising Islamic sultanate of Mataram, led by its ambitious founder Panembahan Senapati. Conflict between the two escalated as Wanabaya, the *Ki Ageng* (ruler, literally great master) of Mangir attempted to safeguard the *perdikan's* autonomy and refused to submit to the authority of the *kraton*. Against this backdrop Wanabaya was infatuated with Adisaroh, a beautiful dancer who in reality was Putri Pembayun, Senapati's eldest daughter-in-disguise who had been given the clandestine mission to bring Wanabaya to the *kraton* to be executed. Wanabaya married Adisaroh/Pembayun, who unexpectedly grew to love the *Ki Ageng*. His infatuation with Adisaroh/Pembayun distracted him from his leadership role and the story ends with his death at the hands of Senapati and his troops, his brokenhearted wife begging her royal father to also end her life.

Mas Didi told me that prior to Pramoedya's 1976 adaptation of the narrative into a modern play, the story (*lakon*) of Mangir was popularly performed as a *ketoprak* (a Javanese theatrical genre) in the 1950s and early 1960s. In the 1970s, the story gradually disappeared from the *ketoprak* stage as the New Order government authorities forbade the performance of plays

with explicit themes of class conflict and rebellion against established authority.[31] Pramoedya's modern rewriting of the story of Mangir*,* together with his other works, were deemed as subversive literature by the new regime and were banned. Branded as a communist, Pramoedya was imprisoned for fourteen years (1965-1979), ten of these on the Moluccan island of Buru, where he penned the play. Following his release, Pramoedya remained under house arrest until 1992 (Toer 1999). Only following the collapse of the New Order regime in 1998, did Pramoedya's works began to reappear in Indonesian bookshops. When I asked Mas Didi about his decision to stage *Mangir* in a highly anti-communist town like Pekalongan, he replied that the time had come to acquaint the younger generation with a forgotten Indonesian literary masterpiece:

> In Pekalongan we tend to only perform plays with Islamic or Qurʾānic themes. Our youngsters today are only familiar with such plays. Most of them are boring. They are not even well-written. My father told me that back in the fifties and sixties, the youth of Pekalongan were very progressive. Even though they came from a small provincial town, they were able to stage famous plays, even the theatre of the absurd. Do you know that they once staged Ionesco's play at the Fajar theatre? Many of them became national literary figures. They were the spearheads of the Tempo magazine. So of course I want to help my younger friends to redevelop performing arts in this city and introduce them to famous literary works. After all, who is to say that a particular piece is Islamic or not? *Mangir* tells the story (*mengisahkan*) of an Islamic village and an Islamic state. Why can't we perceive it as a story with an Islamic theme?

Mangir has certainly been subjected to various critical readings, most of which highlight class conflict and state's oppression as the two general themes of this Machiavellian play (Hatley 2008). But that evening, as I listened to Mas Didi following my first experience of watching the play, made me realize the underlying question of Islamic religious authority latent in

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[31] Although contrary to Mas Didi's explanation, Clara van Groenendael mentions that the story of Mangir was regularly performed by various *ketoprak* groups during her stay in Solo and Kediri between 1976-1978 and 1985-1986 respectively (2008: 176).

Pramoedya's play. *Mangir* is indeed a story of contestation between two different institutionalized forms of Islamic religious authority, that of the *perdikan* — which resembles the *ḥawṭa* discussed in the last section — and that of the *kraton*. Both institutions are assemblages that grew out of historically-situated projects of constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*. To fully grasp this dynamic, however, one needs to go back to the notion of Islamic *kraton,* its relationship to the *perdikans*, and the religio-political authority it embodies, namely the regulator of religion, or as my Javanese friends describe it, the *panatagama*.

The first Islamic polity that emerged in Java was the Sultanate of Demak, which the Javanese believe to be founded by Raden Patah (d. 1518) in agreement with eight of the nine *wali sanga*. The saints coronated Raden Patah, and both parties agreed to divide authority into the interrelated spheres of the religion and the state (Moertono 1963: 30). The agreement stipulates that the temporal ruler is answerable to the saints who also acted as arbitrators between feuding ruling elites, a role that resembles their role among the Arabian tribes. One of the Surakartan court chronicles, the *Babad Joko Tingkir*, for instance, discusses Demak as "a Javanese 'caliphate,' which meant (at least in theory) the instatement of Javanese kingship as the supreme temporal representative of God's dominion" (Florida 1995: 325-6). As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the Demak Mosque, which today remains an important pilgrimage site constructed by the saints in 1498, served as a monument that "stand for, and to stand as basis for, Moslem kingship in Java" (*Ibid*: 321). As a caliph, the sultan was given the task to enforce the *sharīʾa* — or *sunna*-derived laws — in the realm. Seen in this way, the *kraton* was a political project of constituting a *jamāʿa* that revolved around the Prophetic *sunna* as articulated, laid down, and enforced by the ruler in consultation with the scholarly elites. Theoretically speaking,

in consideration of the changing public interest, temporal rulers are also able to establish, under the juristic principe of *siyāsa sharʿiyya* (*sharīʿa*-oriented policy), their own customs or rulings as they see fit "even if no authority is found for them in divine revelation and the *sunna* of the Prophet" (Kamali 2003: 355).[32] Such an authority made the *kraton* the complement to, but also the potential competitor of, the scholarly elites.

The political structure of the Demak Sultanate seems to be founded on medieval Sunni political theories which posits sovereignty as stemming from the role of coercive force, that is, raw military and disciplinary power that is legitimated and simultaneously restricted by Islamic law as extrapolated from the Qurʾān and the *sunna* by the scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*). Central to this structure is also the assumption of the individual as a *homo economicus* essentially in need of agriculture and commerce to survive. Similar to the *ḥawṭa*, political sovereignty facilitates agriculture and trade by ensuring security and the enactment of justice within the boundaries of Islamic law and morality. The *ʿulamāʾ*, as the interpreters of the Qurʾān and the *sunna* are essential to the political order. In this capacity, the scholars are known as "people who loosen and bind" (*ahl al-ḥall wa al-ʿaqd*).[33]

Existing autonomously alongside the *kraton* were the *perdikans*, the seats of the religious authorities. Several of these *perdikans* were founded by the *wali sanga* and their disciples, some

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[32] Notable examples of the *siyāsa sharʿiyya* include the first caliph's Abū Bakr's decision to compiled scattered records of the Qurʾān in a single volume and to wage war on those who refused to pay the *zakāt*. The second caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb also suspended the execution of the Qurʾānically prescribed punishment for theft — namely amputation of the hand — in a year of famine. These decisions were taken single-handedly by the ruling authority for the sake of protecting public interest (*maṣlaḥa*) despite the the presence of clear rulings in the Qurʾān or the absence of precedents in the Prophetic *sunna* (Kamali 2003: 354-5). *Siyāsa sharʿiyya* or king's law— which remains in place today in Saudi Arabia — complements and can even compete with the law drawn and adjudicated by the jurists (Vogel 2000).

[33] Formalized in the tenth century, such an arrangement was devised as a response to the rise of the Saljuks as the real military and political power-holders of the Abbasid Empire and hence the need to impose control over them (al-Ghazālī 2003: II, Book 26, 1120-1123; al-Māwardī 1955: 192-3; al-Māwardī 1966: 146-152; Nizām al-Mulk 1960: 43-7).

of which, like Ampel Denta in Surabaya and Gunung Jati in Cirebon, were established under the auspices of the pre-Islamic Hindu kingdom of Majapahit and Pajajaran. The *perdikans* were important sites of Islamic learning that revolved around the authorities of their founding-scholars/saints and their descendants. Several of these, like Gunung Jati, Giri, Surabaya, and Banten even developed to become semi-*kratons* in their own right. This religio-political constellation generated the emergence of royal and saintly dynasties, whose relationship to each other was often fraught with turbulence, but also marked by complex overlaps and intermarriages. Such marriages, for one, facilitated the entry of Islamic culture and literature developed in the *perdikans* into the *kraton*. The rulers of the Mataram Sultanate (founded by Panembahan Senapat in 1586, the antagonist in *Mangir*), for instance, claim descent from both the royal Mataram line that goes back to the rulers of the Hindu-Budhist Majapahit kingdom and the mythic kings of the Mahabharata, and from the *wali sanga* (in particular Sunan Kudus), which ultimately goes back to the Prophet Muḥammad.

The gradual expansion and consolidation of Mataram was marked by the *kraton*'s attempt to dismantle the established political-spiritual constellation through the pacifications of several influential *perdikans*. The reign of Amangkurat I witnessed a huge number of "Mohammedan popes" — as Dutch writers describe them — executed following their involvement in the rebellion of the king's younger brother (Kumar 1985: 3). In 1590, the semi-*kraton* of Cirebon, the seat of the descendants of the saint Sunan Gunung Jati, signed a treaty of submission to Mataram. In 1679 and 1680 respectively, the influential *perdikan* of Kadjoran and the semi-*kraton* of Giri — both of whom refused to submit to Mataram's authority — were ransacked and destroyed by the army of Amangkurat II (Moertono 1963: 31-33). The redrawn political

geography signaled Mataram's attempt to capture undivided sacro-political power that mirrored the old Hindu-Budhist Majapahit polity, thereby securing Javanese kingship as supreme spiritual and temporal sovereignty. The rulers of Mataram were not only sultans; they also claimed the mantle of *panatagama*, regulators of religion.

In 1755, the war of succession between the ruler of Mataram, Pakubuwana II and his brother Prince Mangkubumi resulted in the signing of the treaty of Giyanti that divided the kingdom into two. Thereafter, Pakubuwana III became the ruler of *kraton* Surakarta (known as the *sunan*) ruling over the eastern half of Mataram's dominion, and Mangkubumi — taking the regal title of Hamengkubuwana — became the sovereign of *kraton* Yogyakarta (known as the *sultan*) with suzerainty over the western half. Both assumed the title of *panatagama* in their respective dominions. The ensuing relationship between the *perdikans* and two *kratons* (Surakarta and Yogyakarta) was not always adversarial. Up to the early nineteenth century, before the two *kratons* became subsumed under colonial rule, a more productive relationship was more of the norm. The two forms of authority "are not defined against one another in sheer binary opposition (Florida 1995: 347) despite the persistent tension that has appeared throughout Javanese history from at least the early seventeenth century.

The *kraton* thus emerges as a religio-political institution that constituted a Javanese *jamāʿa* as subjects of its sovereignty. Unlike the *ḥawṭa* or the *perdikan*, the *kraton* demanded the allegiance of its *jamāʿa*, if necessary by force. Sovereignty allowed the *kraton* to align the

jamāʿa to its own articulation of the *sunna*. In so doing, it emerged as an independent center of Islam "that recognizes no single absolute temporal authority" (Florida 1995: 336).[34]

The historian M.C. Ricklefs (2006) has conceptualized the instantiation of Islam that developed in the *kraton* as *mystic synthesis,* which in his view, rested on three main pillars: (1) a strong sense of Javanese Islamic identity, (2) observation of the five pillars of Islamic ritual, and (3) acceptance of the reality of local Javanese spiritual forces such as Ratu Kidul (the Goddess of the Southern Ocean), Sunan Lawu (the spirit of Mount Lawu) and other lesser supernatural beings. The notion of *mystic synthesis,* however, seemingly denotes a unique combination made up of what some would describe as the more purified elements of Islam (pillar 1 & 2) and other non-Islamic elements (pillar 3). But perhaps one could also retain the term Islam to denote this particular *kraton*-based religiosity. As one among multiple instantiations of Islam that have developed historically in different parts of the Muslim world, this particular *kraton*-centered Islam only became increasingly seen as *mystic, synthetic, syncretic*, or even *problematic* due to the modern promotion and acceptance of a particular historically/geographically situated instantiation of Islam as normative, thereby measuring other instantiations on its own terms.[35] One might perhaps begin by asking whether the *kraton* ever distinguished the three pillars of Ricklef's *mystic synthesis* as distinct elements at all. If not, then we would indeed have to ask, from what point of view do they become visible as such. When one particular — and often culturally purified and abstracted— Islamic normativity is accepted, then other more complex

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[34] One can indeed compare the notion of Javanese Islamic kingship with the notion of "millenial sovereign" (Moin 2012) claimed by the Mughal emperor Akbar, a conception of sovereignty that combines the notion of absolute kingship with that of Sufi sainthood. The title of the ruler of Mataram, Pakubuwana, meaning "Axes of the World" itself was created to recall the Sufi notion of *quṭb*, or the axial saint of the age, on whom the world metaphysically depends. See: Ricklefs 1998; Florida Forthcoming

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and culturally-bound instantiations of Islam are seen as 'Islam + *y,*' where *y* points to the various elements deemed to be different from Islam such as "Javanism" or "Hinduism".[36] To assume that culture and politics are extrinsic to Islam is to miss the complex and often conflictual historically situated work of power in producing religious orthodoxy, constituting a *sunna* and a *jamāʿa,* as well as in determining the alignment between the two.

To illustrate this further, let me turn to the figure of Prince Dipanagara, the leader of the Java War (1825-1830) against the Dutch colonial regime, and an aspirant to the mantle of the *panatagama,* who, in the words of his biographer,

> drew inspiration from the ancestral spirit world of the Javanese heartland just as much as from his devotion to Islam and the esoteric teachings of the Shaṭṭārīyya, precisely the type of 'mystic synthesis' which Ricklefs has described as reaching its epitome in early nineteenth-century Java (Carey 2008:150).

As many historians of Java have noted, the Java War that ended with the victory of the colonial forces marked the twilight of the old *kraton*-centered socio-political order in Java, a process that brought about the gradual withering of the *kraton*-based Islam. Drawing on Peter Carey's exhaustive biography of Prince Dipanagara, I want to situate the Prince as one of the last emblematic figures who embodied the form of Islamic authority that I have described as the *panatagama*.[37] Observing the history of this mystifying character helps us to make sense of

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[36] Thus Clifford Geertz (1968), informed by a modern (and Protestant) conception of religion (Asad 1993; Keane 2007), presents a historically-divested figure of Sunan Kalijaga — one of the *wali sanga* — to highlight the strong Indic undercurrent that made up the deeply syncretic character and the superficiality of Islam among the Javanese.

[37] During my fieldwork in Indonesia, Peter Carey's *The Power of Prophecy* was translated into Indonesian and published by the leading publishing house Gramedia. The publication of this 1000 page book became news for several months. Several conferences were held. Many people I met in Pekalongan and Jakarta, including Habib Luthfi, were actively talking about the book. Central to these discussions was the contour of Islam in Java as embodied by the Prince that stands in marked contrast with the way Islam has been imagined in the twentieth century.

Islam as a historically situated and culturally specific project of aligning and mutually calibrating the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*.

Prince Dipanagara was born in the *kraton* of Yogyakarta, Central Java in 1785. His father was the eldest son of the second sultan of Yogyakarta, who briefly ascended the throne between 1812-1814. Dipanagara himself also claimed that he was maternally descended from the *wali sanga* (Carey 2008: 72), thereby embodying both the royal and saintly genealogies. Unlike other princes who grew up within the walls of the *kraton*, Dipanagara was brought up by his pious great-grandmother, the widow of the first sultan, in her estate in Tegalrejo in the outskirts of Yogyakarta. There, he grew up in an atmosphere of Islamic piety and devotion. Living in farmland also enabled him to become familiar with the livelihood of the peasants and developed his sensitivity towards their plight. Whilst growing up, Dipanagara mixed with the *santri* (pious muslim) community and studied Islamic texts under Muslim scholars who frequented the estate. He immersed himself in Islamic theology, law, Arabic grammar, Qurʾānic exegesis, Sufism, and history, as well as edifying works including the *Naṣīhat al-mulūk* (advice for princes). At the same time he delved into pre-Islamic Javanese classics like the *Serat Rama* and *Arjuna Wiwaha* (*Ibid*: 104-5). Peter Carey describes his religious outlook:

> As regards Dipanagara's doctrinal position as a Muslim, it can be seen from his writings that *he was more a typical Javanese mystic than an orthodox Muslim reformer.* This was recognised early in the Java War by his principle religious adviser, Kyai Maja, himself a possible adherent of Shaṭṭārīyya mystical brotherhood (*tarekat*), who pointed out that the prince seemed to be striving for the mystical unity of the Sufi. Despite an impressive display of quotations from the *Qurʾān* in his Makassar notebooks, Dipanagara laid the greatest stress on the use of *dhikr* (short prayers for the glorification of Allah which are endlessly repeated in ritual order) and on various forms of meditation…According to Dipanagara, the repeated use of such *dhikr* would enable the 'name of majesty' (*isim jalalah*), which is Allah, to become 'engraved' on the innermost heart (*ati sanubari*). Finally, he took a mystical view of the fundamental dogma of Islam, namely *tokid* (Arabic *tawhīd*), the profession of Allah's

> unity and uniqueness. He considered that all man's efforts should be directed towards living up to this profession of unity by denying being to all that exists, inclusive of himself, and striving after union with the Eternal and Only Being (*Kang Jati Purbaning Sukma*) (*Ibid*: 111-112, emphasis added).

Lieutenant Julius Heinrich Knoerle, a German officer who accompanied the prince on his journey into exile following the conclusion of the Java War, described the Prince as follows:

> Dipanagara is very closely acquainted with the spirit which pervades the religious system of [the Prophet]. I believe he judges all miracles achieved by Muhammad from a fair point of view and knows very well how to distinguish [their supernatural aspects from] the [historical] circumstances in which Muhammad found himself (quoted in Carey 2008: 110).

Here I want to suggest that rather than describing the Prince as "a typical Javanese mystic" that stands in opposition to "an orthodox Muslim reformer," one can perhaps comprehend Dipanagara as a proponent of a distinct conception of the *sunna,* which can be considered as mainstream for his time. Dipanagara was familiar with Prophetic history and custom. Nevertheless the Prophetic *sunna* that he was mainly concerned with was more Sufi-oriented, one that revolves around a set of physical and spiritual disciplines directed towards spiritual ascent, not unlike that which is described in the writings of the early Bā ʿAlawī *murshids* of Tarīm. It is a notion of Prophetic *sunna* that posits the Prophet's night ascension to the divine presence, the *miʿrāj*, (as well as his descend back to the sensible realm) as its central paradigm for emulation. Such a conception of the *sunna* has been elaborated by Sufi metaphysicians in numerous works including *al-Tuḥfa al-murāsala ilā rūh al-nabī* (The gift addressed to the spirit of the Prophet) of the Gujarati Shaṭṭarī scholar, Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allāh al-Burhanpūrī (d. 1029/1620), which according to Carey was amongst the Prince's favorite readings (*Ibid*: 103).[38]

[38] Written for the scholarly elites, the *Tuḥfa* is a work of Sufi metaphysic that presents the ontology of seven grades of being. The popularity of this esoteric work among the Muslims of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago drove the Medinan scholar Ibrāhīm al-Kurānī (d. 1101/1690) to write an explanatory treatise entitled the *Itḥaf al-dhakī* (The Gifting of the Clever) which was addressed to the "people of Jawa" (Laffan 2011: 18).

While the emphasis this notion of *sunna* is quite different from that preached by "an orthodox Muslim reformer," it should nevertheless be considered as a *sunna* precisely because it centers on the figure of the Prophet, taken as a source of emulation.

When he was twenty years old, Dipanagara embarked on a spiritual wandering, or what is known in Java as *lelono,* akin to the Islamic conception of *riḥla,* or travel as a means for "seeking advanced learning in religious matters and spiritual fulfillment" (El Moudden 1990: 69). The practice of *riḥla* is premised on the Qurʾānic story of Moses traveling in search of the wise al-Khiḍr (see: appendix A), which, according to the eminent Sufi Rūzbihān Baqlī (d. 606/1209), establishes the "*sunna* in following the masters (*mashāʾikh*) (Halman 2013:120). Quoting Soemarsaid Moertono, Carey explains this important *rite de passage*:

> To set off on wanderings when one's age was approaching adulthood meant to find wisdom in the sense of finding a teacher who could guide one's development in a fashion in which one's powers would outstrip those of ordinary men. It also sometimes entailed acquiring tranquility […] so that on one's return one would be able to withstand all temptations. It was even occasionally a time of testing the knowledge and wisdom which one had already acquired [through youthful spiritual and meditative practice]. This tradition was continued during the Islamic period in Java when people set off on long journeys — sometimes from west to east Java and back again — to find esoteric knowledge at religious schools (Carey 2008: 127).

Dipanagara began his peregrination by visiting several *perdikans* and *pesantrens* (Islamic boarding schools). He then visited and meditated at places of crucial historical connections to his royal ancestors, including caves and graves. During these meditations he beheld several spiritual visions, meeting important historical and mythical figures, including the aforementioned Sunan Kalijaga and Ratu Kidul (the Goddess of the Southern Ocean), both of whom prophesied the

upcoming ruin of Java and the Prince's future as the divinely anointed *ratu adil* (just king).[39] The Ratu Kidul proposed to help Dipanagara in facing his future enemies, an offer that the Prince rejected, "for in religion there is only the assistance of the Almighty" (*Ibid*: 146). Dipanagara's *lelono* and his imaginal meetings with both Islamic saintly spirits and pre-Islamic deities highlight an imaginal world that dynamically combines the ancestral spirit world of Java and the conception of the Prophetic *sunna* as promulgated by the teachings of, among others, the Shaṭṭārīyya. It is a world where Muslim saints and local spiritual forces can paradoxically coexist, without needing a resolution.[40]

Between 1809 and 1810, Dipanagara witnessed an unprecedented colonial intrusion into his homeland. The eastern territories of the Yogyakarta Sultanate were annexed by the colonial force, and the new Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, Herman Willem Daendels (d. 1818), acting on behalf of the Napoleonic Empire, enforced several crippling and humiliating treaties on the two *kratons*. One year following the British invasion of Java in 1811, the British Lieutenant-Governor Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (d. 1826) turned decidedly against the Sultanate of Yogyakarta and ransacked the *kraton*, adding more humiliations to prior injuries. The return of the Dutch in August 1816 resulted in further radical changes in Java, the most important of which was the absorption of Java into the global market and the expansion of

[39] It is crucial to note that spirits like the Goddess of the Southern Ocean was not considered as divine. Rather they were treated as spiritual beings with limited God-given power. As such, recognizing their power was not regarded as *shirk* or associating other beings with the divine. Modern Muslim reformists, however, tend to overlook this subtle but important qualifier.

[40] It is important to note that in Sufi Islamic metaphysics, the imaginal world is not a mere imaginary. The imaginal is understood to have ontological reality, one that dwells in an intermediate domain between the spiritual or rational and the physical or sensible realities. The imaginal shares in the attributes of the two sides that define it. An imaginal thing is therefore "both the same as and different from each sides that define it," just like a mirror image that bridges the reflected object and the mirror. The mirror image is both the same and different from the mirror and the reflected object (Chittick 1994: 25).

foreign capital into the Javanese hinterlands. The Dutch were desperate for profits that would help them to recover from the devastating Napoleonic War. Carey describes the situation:

> The combination of the land tax, poor harvests, the 1821 cholera epidemic, the tollgates and the renting of estates to Europeans had turned south-central Java into a powder keg. The popular disturbances of 1817-1822 with their quirky millenarian hopes were a symptom of this deepening despair. In Yogya, in particular, many were united in a powerful sense of humiliation at the outcome of the events of 1812… The desire for regeneration and the re-establishment of the old political order governing relations with the European government had begun to fuse with messianic expectations of a golden age of justice and plenty. What was now required was for a leader of sufficient stature to proclaim himself and bind the discontented to his cause (Carey 2008: 504).

That awaited leader was Dipanagara, whose twin genealogy and eclectic upbringing enabled him to speak to diverse elements of the Javanese society including royalty and aristocrats, Muslim scholars and *santris*, as well as the peasants. The Prince, whose vision of a normative socio-religious order had been shattered by the violent colonial expansion, was determined to unite these diverse elements under the banner of a holy war (*prang sabil*) against the Dutch.[41]

As the details of the Java War have already been meticulously reconstructed by Peter Carey, there is no need to discuss them further. What I want to suggest, however, is that one way to understand the enigmatic Prince and his significant success in assembling a composite force, is to see it as a project of constituting a *jamāʿa*. Dipanagara, as I have mentioned earlier, embodied a particular conception of *sunna*. He was deeply influenced by the teachings of the Shaṭṭārīyya, older Javanese imaginations, and Javanese court culture, all of which coalesced

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[41] The Java War that spanned between 1825-1830 was, in Carey's words, "the last stand of Java's 'old order'" (2008: 654). It resulted in "a huge upheaval in Javanese society" which

> affected two million Javanese, one third of the total population of the island. An estimated 200.000 Javanese civilians died and one fourth of the cultivated area of Java sustained damage. In securing their pyrrhic victory, the Dutch lost 8.000 of their own troops as well as 7.000 Indonesian auxiliaries. The 20 million guilder cost to their exchequer would only be recouped through Van den Bosch's Cultivation System, which brought an estimated 823 million guilders to the Dutch exchequer between 1831 and 1877 (*Ibid*: 653-4).

without being necessarily reconciled in his very person.[42] In doing so, Dipanagara reformulated the *sunna*, one that integrates Prophetic teachings and Javanese traditions communicable to the composite *jamāʿa* he was constituting.[43] Such a reformulated *sunna* was certainly marked by unresolved tensions, which in this case generated creativity (Bateson 1972) and power. The Prince was able to simultaneously embody several recognizable leadership roles including a heroic *senapati* (commander), a holy warrior determined to fight the unbelievers, and a *ratu adil*, the just messianic king as foretold in old Javanese prophecies. By embodying these diverse and sometimes contradictory notions of authority, the Prince was able to assemble a composite martial *jamāʿa* that could maintain an extended war effort.

Such inherent tensions, however, ultimately undermined Dipanagara's project of constituting a durable *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*. The configuration of the *jamāʿa* envisaged by Dipanagara was one that modeled itself on the established notion of Javanese *kraton*, which ultimately did not fare well with some of his *santri* supporters. After all, the history of Islam in Java was marked by often-time uneasy tensions between royal courts and religious centers:

> Dipanagara reinforced this image of a court by conferring titles on his close family…, marrying key supporters to members of his family, distributing traditional largesse to his supporters at the time of the Garebeg ceremonies, having one of his *santri* advisers act the court jester…, and giving yellow *payung* (state umbrellas) to his princely followers and military commanders as a mark of their status in the holy war. The fact that these quintessential *kraton* symbols of office were described in the Javanese sources as 'signs of the holy war' (*pratandha prang sabil*) is a measure of the confusion which seems to have prevailed about what Dipanagara was doing. Was he establishing a *kraton* or

[42] While today the Shaṭṭāriyya is a minor Sufi tradition in Indonesia, it was the dominant Sufi tradition in the Malay world from the time of its introduction in the 1660s until the middle of the nineteenth century. Shaṭṭārī initiates held important religious, political, and literary posts in the Mataram court, including the Surakartan king Pakubuwana IV. See: Florida forthcoming.

[43] Thus Carey shows how prior to the final negotiation between Dipanagara and the Dutch, the Prince refused even to acknowledged letters sent to him from the Dutch authority. Only when he was told by one of his scholarly advisors that "in the time of The Prophet, if a letter arrived it would be studied to ascertain whether its contents were good or bad, and then replied to accordingly," did Dipanagara decided to respond to the letter (Carey 2008: 669).

> fighting for something entirely different — a new moral order in Java in which the high state of the Islamic religion would be restored? (Carey 2008: 632).

One should perhaps refrain from projecting too strong a division or divisions between the *kraton* and the *santris*.[44] The two are not necessarily contradictory, however, if one understands the *kraton* as a religio-political project of creating association between a formulation of the *sunna* and a constituted *jamāʿa* as embodied in the figure of the *panatagama*. But according to Carey, some of the Prince's *santri* followers began to perceive Dipanagara as seeking worldly goals, violating the *sharīʿa*, and "too taken up with Javanese superstitions and beliefs" (*Ibid*: 636). The conflict over the configuration of the *jamāʿa* shows that in a project of assembling a *jamāʿa*, configuration matters. It matters whether the ideological or discursive shape a social assemblage takes on is recognized and appreciated by its constituents or not.

What is clear, however, is that Dipanagara was aspiring to the mantle of the *panatagama*. Up to the very conclusion of the peace negotiation with the Dutch in 1830, the Prince refused to settle on any position except to be recognized as the "royal maintainer and regulator of religion in Java (*ratu paneteg panatagama ing Tanah Jawa sedaya*), or "head of the Islamic religion" (*Ibid:* 682). In his report, the Dutch military commander, General De Kock wrote:

> I told Dipanagara that his conduct up to that time had made me fear that he would come up with such rash demands [and] that he could have easily concluded that the government could not now permit what had not even been discussed in 1827… He knew well that the government had promised and given protection to the Sunan of Surakarta and the sultan of Yogyakarta for the past five years, and that these rulers were, according to eastern custom, themselves the heads of religion in their own lands. Dipanagara then said that if

[44] It should be noted that Kyai Maja a Shaṭṭārī scholar who served as Dipanagara's principal religious advisor was known to have been very close to members of the Surakartan royal family. Indeed he was a teacher in a rural religious establishment endowed by the *kraton* Surakarta. While Kyai Maja stood at the center of a Shaṭṭarī network of Islamic teachers that provided the core backing for Dipanagara's force, he was also well-connected to members of the Javanese royalty, some of whom were his disciples. The case of Kyai Maja alone should desist us from projecting too strong a division between the *kraton* and the *santris.* See: Florida forthcoming.

> what he wanted was not accorded him, the government could do with him what it chose, but that he himself was not going to give up his demands. (quoted in Carey 2008: 693).

Dipanagara was an aspirant to the position of the *panatagama.* His was a project of constituting a Javanese *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* as historically configured in the institution of the Islamic *kraton*.[45] Such a project of establishing connection and creating an assemblage, however, is subject to misrecognition and misunderstanding from its own constituents that threatened it with the prospect of failure.

Dipanagara spent the last years of his life living under house arrest in Makassar, Sulawesi. Living in solitude, stranded from most of his family members and follower, the Prince who had witnessed more glorious days, decided to inscribe his understanding of the *sunna* into two texts, written "in a curious Javanese style with many Arabic words and phrases" (Carey 2008: 745). The texts were written for his only remaining *jamāʿa*: his children. In one of the books, Dipanagara still refers to himself as "Sultan Ngabdulkamid Èrucakra Kabirul Mukminin Panatagama Kalifat Rosulullah s.s. ing Tanah Jawa" (Sultan ʿAbd al-Ḥāmid, the Just King, the great among the believers, the regulator of religion, caliph of the Prophet of God, may peace be on him, in the land of Java) (*Ibid*). Its contents, according to Carey,

> deal with the prince's understanding of Islam, his own religious experiences, Sufi prayers used by the Naqshabandīyya and Shaṭṭārīyya mystical brotherhoods … and various meditation techniques most of which involved the control of the breath. Diagrams (*daérah*) for the utterance of Arabic words and breathing exercises during prayers as well

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[45] This observation is certainly consistent with Carey's own conclusion to his seminal work, in which he describes Dipanagara as

> a Javanese Muslim who saw no problem with contacting the goddess of the Southern Ocean, undertaking pilgrimage to holy sites associated with Java's spirit guardians and rulers, and drinking bottles of 'medicinal' sweet Cape wine, while maintaining a staunch commitment to his Islamic duties. Part of the 'Long shadow of Sultan Agung,' Dipanagara fought both for the restoration of an idealized Javanese past and the establishment of a new moral order in which the teachings of Islam, especially its legal codes, would be enforced (2008: 758).

> as local Javanese mystical traditions (*ngèlmu*) are frequently referred to. Indeed, the whole book is rather reminiscent of a Javanese divination manual or *primbon* (*Ibid*: 745).

If Carey sees the text as akin to a Javanese divination manual, his own description seems to resonate more with a work concerning the notion of *sunna* as I have tried to develop in this chapter. Confronted by the failure to enforce the *sunna* and constitute a bigger *jamāʿa* by means of the sword, the aging Prince turned to the pen, inscribing the *sunna* in modular forms hoping that they could guide his offspring and, perhaps, future *jamāʿa*. As Dipanagara was concluding his textual project, however, other and less intricate — certainly less composite and less personalized — *ḥadīth*-oriented *sunna* texts had begun to proliferate in Java, a subject that will be taken up in the next chapter. Amidst such a rapid change, the Dipanagaran *sunna* texts became increasingly seen as "syncretic" and problematic Javanese divination manuals.

Conclusion

Saints and sultans are two similar, often interchangeable, but different forms of authorities that emerged from different projects of assembling the social. Whether in the form of an elite *ṭarīqa*, *ḥawṭa, perdikan* or *kraton*, such projects attempt to ensure growth, whether an individual's spiritual growth through a set of disciplines or a collective growth by facilitating and protecting agriculture and commerce. These historical projects involve the constitution of a collective, known in Islamic idiom, as a *jamāʿa* that revolves around the Prophetic *sunna*. Both the contours of the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* are historically situated and culturally specific. Aligning different *jamāʿa* to the *sunna* involves subjecting both to mutual calibrations. Subjecting a particular *jamāʿa* to a model of the *sunna* involves reconfiguring the later to suit the concrete needs of the former, although much, of course, depends on what one takes to be "concrete" and a "need."

Such a mechanism generates the development of multiple and often overlapping *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas*. Each *jamāʿā* is linked to a particular articulation of the *sunna* through one or more connectors whose authority is formed from their ability to forge connections and maintain the resulting social assemblage through various means. *Ṭarīqa, ḥawṭa, perdikan*, and *kraton* are different configurations of historically-situated social assemblages that hinge on the authority of one or several connectors, whether saints or sultans.

Situating the problem of religious authority in this way enables one to begin to grasp its highly precarious character. At the same time, it allows us to inquire into the apparatuses that can establish perdurance. As a connector, the effectiveness of an authority hinges on his/her ability to constitute a *jamāʿa*. He or she needs to be accepted and recognized as associated with the supreme authority, that of the Prophet. He or she has to negotiate a functioning connection between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*, whether by force and military might in the case of sultans, or by persuasion and performance of miracles in the case of saints. At the same time, a *jamāʿa* may expand or contract, like the case of Dipanagara who commanded an extensive *jamāʿa* at one point, and was left only with his children at another. Similarly, as social assemblages, *ṭarīqa, ḥawṭa*, *perdikan*, and *kraton* are malleable. Made up diverse associations and linkages, they can grow or shrink. Thus the networks of *ḥawṭas* established by the Sanusiyya in Cyrenaica developed into a fully-functioning state, while the *kraton* of Cirebon was reduced to become a *perdikan* under Mataram's suzerainty. Saints and sultans are indeed interchangeable. In the next chapter I turn to the formation of another religious authority, that of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* or instructing shaykhs and their projects of constituting a duplicable notion of *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* by advocating individual responsibility and minimizing collective indeterminacy through the

propagation of a common and standardized theological, ethical, and devotional code accessible to self-conscious agentive subjects.

Chapter II

Instructing Shaykhs

Sejak umur 21 tahun
Terakhir melihat wadi gurun
Dari Aden menuju Betawi
Setelah muntah di dek kapal Inggris
Matanya menghijau royo
Tanah yang dipijak gembur-subur
Baik ditanam hadis dan fikih
Yang mengakar di setiap sel otaknya

-Zeffry J. Alkatiri, *Habib*

Langgar al-Ḥusayn is a small prayer hall situated in the āl-Shahāb compound of Ledok, not far from the grand congregational mosque of Pekalongan and the city square. The *langgar* is owned and maintained by the Bā ʿAlawī *sayyids* of the āl-Shahāb's family. *Langgar* al-Ḥusayn only holds the five obligatory prayers usually attended by members of the family and nearby neighbors. Every evening, following the *maghrib* (twilight) prayer, the imam of the *langgar* leads the *jamāʿa* to recite the *rātib* and the *ʿaqīda* of an eighteenth century Bā ʿAlawī luminary, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d. 1132/1720).[46] Meant to be recited individually and

[46] The *rātib* (literally means ordering) is a devotional text composed of Qurʾānic verses, poetic prayers and invocations, some of which are repeated several times. The recitation ends with supplications on behalf of the Prophet and his Bā ʿAlawī descendants including the composer of the *rātib*. The *ʿaqīda* is a creedal text articulating basic Islamic doctrines that consists of compact and simplified explanation of the articles of faith.

collectively, both the *rātib* and the *ʿaqīda* are written in simple formats to facilitate memorization.[47] The *jamāʿa* of *langgar* al-Ḥusayn recite the *rātib* and the *ʿaqīda* from memory.[48]

Abdurrahman Shihāb is the current imam of the *langgar*. A pleasant and jovial man in his early sixties, Abdurahman owns a shop selling *sarongs* at the local market. When time for prayer comes, he closes his shop, rides on his old motorcycle, changes into a clean *sarong,* white shirt, and prayer cap, and rushes to lead the prayer. Oftentimes he finds the *jamāʿa* already waiting. Being an imam of a small *langgar* is a voluntary occupation. Abdurahman took on the mantle when the health of the previous imam, his father's paternal cousin, was deteriorating. "I am not a scholar, nor do I know anything about religion except for how to perform the ablution (*wuḍuʾ*), lead the prayers and recite the *rātib,*" Abdurahman told me. But a sense of *noblesse oblige* drove him to take on the position when nobody from the family was willing to take on the responsibility:

> If none among the āl-Shahāb family is willing to take on the role, then who is going to continue this tradition? The *langgar* was built by my ancestor (*leluhur*). It is our family heritage (*peninggalan keluarga*). I am certainly not the best person for the task, although I did learn basic Islamic law (*fiqḥ*) from one or two *mukhtaṣar*.[49] At least I know how to teach children how to do *wuḍūʾ* and pray. If nobody is willing to do it, can we really stop other people from becoming the imam? The previous imams were not scholars anyway. Our family is not a scholarly family (*memang keluarga kita bukan keluarga ulama*).

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[47] In her study of the nineteenth century East African Sufi networks, Anna Bang (2014: 151) has noted al-Ḥaddād's *rātib "*has been most simply learnt through listening, through internalizing the sounds, intonations and rhythm repeatedly." She also shown how the text of the *rātib* "was copied in manuscript form, either for the process of memorizing, to ensure proper vocalization, or fot further educational use" (*Ibid*).

[48] Al-Ḥaddād's *ʿaqīda* has remained an effective semiotic form that presents "a set of propositions to which believers gave assent" (Asad 1993: 41). To give an example, the current Muslim chaplain of the University of Michigan, Muhammad Tayssir Safi teaches this text to American Muslims as an introduction to Sunni Islamic theology. Safi's eleven-series class on al-Ḥaddād's creed can now be viewed in its entirety on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5xBlpsG7y0

[49] *Mukhtaṣar* (pl. *mukhtaṣarāt*) is the term used to denote derivative abridgments of Islamic legal texts often used as textbooks in traditional Islamic schools. These texts offer condensed and synoptic summaries of classic and complicated legal works. Some of the popular *mukhtaṣars* only discuss laws regarding acts of worship (*fiqḥ ʿibādah*) such as how to perform ablution and prayer, rules on the payment of alms, and rules on *hajj.*

Abdurrahman has been desperately looking for a successor from amongst the family. It has been a difficult task since "being an imam of a *langgar* is not a lucrative position in this world (*jadi imam langgar bukan posisi menguntungkan di dunia*), and moreover they prefer to play facebook (*dan lebih lagi, mereka lebih seneng main facebook*)".

Although not a scholarly family, the āl-Shahāb of Pekalongan was once a wealthy and influential landowning family. In the mid-nineteenth century, a member of the al-Shahāb family of Tarīm, by the name of Aḥmad b. ʿAydarūs, migrated to Pekalongan and married the daughter of a wealthy Ḥaḍramawt-born Bā ʿAlawī entrepreneur, a local sugar baron, from the al-ʿAṭṭās family. Aḥmad learnt the tricks of the trade from his father-in-law and local language and culture from his Pekalongan-born wife. Following the death of his father-in-law, Aḥmad took on the family business and developed it further. He then began investing in properties in Batavia and Jakarta, including the compound of Ledok where the *langgar* still stands and where most of his descendants still live in their airy bungalows. The days of wealth and ostentation, however, are long gone. Abdurrahman told me how later generations of the family had been overindulged with wealth and no longer have the business acumen of their ancestors. "My ancestors were buying lands, now their descendants are selling them," he noted. Despite the elegiac tone of his recollections, Abdurrahman was proud that the *langgar* remains fully operational. He claimed that his *langgar* is different from other *langgars*. "If you sit here and observe the way we do things, you will think you are sitting in Tarīm," he said, although he told me that he himself had never been to Ḥaḍramawt.

The story of the āl-Shahāb family fits into a recognizable pattern of the rise and decline of the Ḥaḍramī diasporic families in Indonesia. It begins with a young Ḥaḍramī crossing the Indian Ocean seeking fortune. In the hostland he works for an already established Ḥadramī entrepreneur and marries his daughter. Unlike his wife's brothers who are born into wealth, the migrant is a hard-worker and is determined to succeed, thereby making him the most suitable heir to the family business. Three generations later, the family business can no longer cope with the changing economy, and the migrant's descendants begin selling family assets to cover expenses. What is missing from this narrative of mansions and shophouses, however, is the story of the *langgars* (and mosques) built by these mercantile elites. What went on inside them? How is it that they remain steady and fully operational when the mansions are decaying and not much remains of the shophouses except for their phantom traces in the soporific bedtime stories told by the grandmothers to their grandchildren?

Observing Abdurrahman lead the collective recitation of al-Ḥaddād's *rātib* and *ʿaqīda* made me cognizant of the *langgar*'s mode of existence as a *jamāʿa* — a social assemblage created from a particular project of connecting and aligning the Prophetic *sunna* with individuals who in the process are configured into a collective actuality. This, however, is not the world of the charismatic planters, sultans, and tribesmen. This is the prosperous world of diasporic Ḥaḍramī mercantile families — or what remains thereof — and their attempts to constitute replicas of *jamāʿa* that took shape in Ḥaḍramawt at a particular historical moment. Central to this project is the work of mediation played by creedal texts, abridged Islamic legal manuals, and devotional compendia, all of which codified and standardized the *sunna* into modular and portable semiotic forms. These semiotic forms open up the possibility for duplicating a *jamāʿa*

as a *sunna*-aligned social formation by generating another form of *connector,* that of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* or instructing shaykh, whose authority is generated through the act of textual transmission and curricular-based instruction. One way to trace this changing association between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* would be to get to know the author of the creedal and devotional texts recited at the *langgar* al-Ḥusayn, namely ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād.

The Complete Call

In the twelfth/eighteenth century, an aggrieved blind Bā ʿAlawī scholar by the name of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād (d. 1132/1720) initiated a reform of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*, which in his view, ought to become the vehicle for societal moral and political transformation. Al-Ḥaddād was dissatisfied with the rampant lawlessness in Ḥaḍramawt and the absence of a credible political authority. He lived in the beginning of the period that is often described by Ḥaḍramī historians as "chaotic" (*fawḍawī*), marked by the decline of the power of the Bā ʿAlawī-backed Kathīrī dynasty that ruled Ḥaḍramawt from the late eighth/fourteenth century (Shāṭirī 1983: II, 387-98; al-ʿAlawī 2002: 141-5). The descendants of the Yāfiʿī mercenaries — initially brought down by a Bā ʿAlawī *manṣab* of ʿInāt (discussed in the last chapter) from an area northeast of Aden to help the Kathīrī state repel the Northern Qāsimī Zaydī expansion into Ḥaḍramawt — were becoming stronger and harder to control. Factional rule and misrule together with the prolonged struggles for power between the Kathīrīs and their former Yāfiʿīs lieutenants divided the urban centers of Ḥaḍramawt, generating political instability that devastated the livelihoods of city dwellers. The irritated al-Ḥaddād observed:

> The various problems faced by this land result from this group [the Yāfiʿī]… there is not a single judge (*qādhi*) who adjudicate based on the principle of the *sharīʿa* (*amr al-sharʿi*) or the legal opinions of the *sharīʿa* (*fatwā sharʿiyya*). Rather, they are the rulings

> of the rebels (*innamā hiya aḥkām al-bughāh*) for the ruler is under their dominion (*maqhūr taḥtahum*). He cannot decide independently, and for that reason it can be concluded that marriage and other forms of transaction are not legitimate. These are matters of the *sharīʿa* that have begun to change. And the legitimacy [of such transactions] is only accepted under [the principle] of emergency. These are things that we cannot tolerate, nor should we be patient of them. If this land were not the land of our migration (*dār hijratunā*), we would emigrate from it. And we do not have another place for migration except for Mirbāṭ. But this is not possible due to our dependents (*al-makālif*) and minors, and others (al-Ḥaddād 1999: 72).

In al-Ḥaddād's view, the problems faced by Ḥaḍramawt required both individual and collective solutions. On the individual level, he stressed the importance of the *ṭarīqa* as a moral ideology that guides people in their daily life. He criticized the elitist bent of the *ṭarīqa,* in that spiritual disciplines were enjoyed only by the elites, leaving the masses to spiritual demise:

> There is no longer Shibām, al-Ghurfa, or Tarīs [names of towns in the Haḍramawt valley]. The spirits have left, leaving only phantoms. Before they were all living, and now they are all dead. There are no dreams and aspirations left [for the people of Shibām, al-Ghurfa and Tarīs] except for pretty attire. When the spirits have left, people only care for beautifying their looks. Only that. They have amended their ways from beautifying their interiority to embellishing their exteriority (al-Ḥaddād 1999: 74).

Al-Ḥaddād was critical of the *manṣabs* who, due to the positions' hereditary nature, were often filled with unlearned individuals whose only concern was perpetuating the asymmetrical relations they had established *vis-à-vis* their tribal *jamāʿas* rather than instructing them on proper religious knowledge like their saintly ancestors (al-Saqqāf 2009: I, 132). Al-Ḥaddād stressed the necessity of elevating the character and morals of every member of society. To this end, he proposed the reformulation of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* into a more accessible and attainable spiritual discipline. In the Ḥaddādian view, the authority of charismatic spiritual masters — and their descendants — who are taken as embodiments of the Prophetic *sunna* around which different *jamāʿas* are aligned, should be significantly downplayed. In contrast, the Prophetic

sunna as encapsulated in the *ḥadīths* and codified into a defined set of creedal, legal, and devotional texts, became for him the virtual model around which a duplicable *jamāʿa* can be constituted.

In al-Ḥaddād's view, the spiritual disciplines observed by the Sufis of the past had become unbearable to the people of his generation. At the same time, their benefits could only be enjoyed by the elites, leaving the masses to spiritual degeneration. For al-Ḥaddād, the *ṭarīqa* should realistically focus on helping people from all walks of life to fulfill their basic religious obligations, rather than stressing difficult devotional exercises (*riyāḍa*) and retreat from society (*ʿuzla*) (al-Ḥaddād 1999: 33). Extending a simplified set of religious knowledge and disciplines to the people through active *daʿwa* (calling/proselytizing) is the foundation for the creation of a stable state and economy.[50] In al-Ḥaddād's perspective, this is the fundamental mission of the learned.

The Ḥaddādian paradigm is most clearly articulated in his mature work, *al-Daʿwa al-tāmma wa-l-tadhkira al-ʿāmma* (The Complete Call and the General Admonition), written in 1114/1702. In this work, al-Ḥaddād provides a blueprint for a perfect society by deploying Qurʾānic verses and Prophetic *ḥadīth*s to elucidate the *sunna*-prescribed roles, rights, and duties of the eight groups that make up a functioning society, namely: scholars, Sufis and ascetics, rulers, merchants and artisans, the poor and the weak, dependents (including women, children,

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[50] Al-Ḥaddād's reformed agenda cannot be separated from his interest in developing local economy. Apart from being known as a successful chicken farmer, al-Ḥaddād was a member of a landowning family who showed great interest in improving the agriculture in the Ḥaḍramawt valley, suggesting "a system of three annual crops using increased amounts of manure" (Freitag 2003: 96). He was also involved in long-distance trade and advised his relatives to travel abroad for this purpose (Freitag 2003: 96). Economic development envisioned by al-Ḥaddād, however, demands a politically stable state and society. In his view, *daʿwa* is precisely the kind of activism that can help to realize political stability.

and servants), common people, and non-Muslims (al-Ḥaddād 1994). Defining the underlying problem of his era, al-Ḥaddād writes:

> Know that in Islam there are periods known as vacuums (*fatarāt*), and humankind today is living in such a period. So many of those who are included in the circle of Islam do not have any knowledge of the kinds of devotion divinely ordained for them and the kinds of vice prohibited for them. Nor do they know about their obligation to learn and perform such knowledge. Then when will they stand to attain and perform such deeds if they have no knowledge of what is obligatory upon them? It becomes incumbent for the people of knowledge and *daʿwa* to fulfill their obligations by introducing them to what is ordained for them. Initially by asking them to seek [knowledge], for whosoever does not know and does not get introduced, will not be able to seek and understand (*Ibid*: 30).

Widespread ignorance, in al-Ḥaddād's view had led to the proliferation of *bidaʿ* (heretical innovations) and *muḥdathāt* (practices and beliefs foreign to the Qurʾān and *sunna*) among the elites and the masses. "There is thus no dispensation for the people of truth, knowledge and, certainty," al-Ḥaddād argues,

> to remain silent from expounding the truth and guidance, to call to Allāh and to His path through words and deeds, to strive with one's ability insofar as it is possible to exterminate (*imātat*) *bidaʿ* and *muḥdathāt,* and to eliminate injustice. The Prophet said: "when tribulations (*fitan*) have manifested themselves and my companions have been reproached, then the learned should show his knowledge. Whoever fails to do so, upon him shall the curse of Allāh, the angels, and all of the humankind (*Ibid*: 23).

Taking the *ḥadīth* as a call for action, al-Ḥaddād redefines the role of the scholars as activists and proselytizers who ought to eradicate innovations and realign the *jamāʿa* — which in this case means Muslims in general — to the *sunna*.

In a forceful tone al-Ḥaddād reprimands his scholarly colleagues who recoiled from such activism:

> The weak scholars (*al-ʿulamāʾ al-muqaṣirūn*), those who are neglectful and mix (*al-takhlīṭ*) [what is good with what is bad], do not place any importance [on *daʿwa*]. Perhaps its importance does not even cross their minds. This is because they are partners to the ignorants in futilities and apathy, as well as in their actions and speeches. They

> cannot be distinguished from them [the ignorants] save by the forms and images of knowledge (*illa bi ṣūrat al-ʿilm wa rusūmihi*) articulated by tongues and appearances. They are not the leaders of guidance. Nor are they from amongst the callers to righteousness or guides to the path (*al-ṭarīq*) to Allāh, the Mighty King. There are even amongst them who cause the masses to be bold and at ease in words and deeds that have no goodness in them, which will trigger the anger of Allāh and his messenger. Such is the way of the masses when they witness those with claims to knowledge and religion while at the same time belittling and taking lightly Allāh's ordinances and commands. Nor do they hasten in their devotions [to God]. All of these may cause the masses to disregard and trifle with religious matters. Perhaps they even cause the masses to become audacious in committing deadly acts and great sins. Scholars who allow such things have become callers of evil and leaders of perversion (*min duʿāt al-sharr wa aʾimmat al-ḍalālah*), whether they know it or not (*Ibid*: 14).

In another passage that seems to illustrate his dissatisfactions with the *manṣabs* and their claim to be the inheritors of the spiritual authority of their saintly ancestors, al-Ḥaddād writes:

> Catastrophe has befallen the population. The disease has spread. The tongues of the reminders of Allāh have become mute. Ignorance and absent-mindedness (*al-ghafla*) have engulfed the general population, to the extent that one without knowledge can fantasize that he has the spiritual states of the people of truth and guidance of the past and that [his] condition is like those who came before (*al-shaʾn ʿalā mithl dhalika kān*). Oh but how far! how far! (*hayhāt*) There is no return for he who has passed and lost! Knowledge disappears with the departure of its possessors, seekers, and aspirants. In a genuine (*ṣaḥīḥ*) *ḥadīth*: "verily Allāh does not take away knowledge by snatching it from the people, but He takes it away by taking away [the lives of] the scholars until none of the learned stays alive. Then the people will take the ignorants as their leaders, who, when asked, will issue opinions without knowledge (*fāʾaftū bi ghayri ʿilmin*) [the result being] they will go astray and lead others astray" (*Ibid*: 22).

In a milder tone, al-Ḥaddād also criticizes scholars who have preoccupied themselves with devotional acts and spiritual disciplines thinking that such acts are superior to *daʿwa*:

> Among the [misconceived] estimation is [that of a] learned individual who preoccupies himself and his time with continuous invocations (*bimuwāṣalat al-awrād*) and exercising prayers like reciting the Qurʾān and chantings and things like that. And he thinks that such [practices] are better for him and superior than calling to Allāh and to His way, and disseminating beneficial religious knowledge. In reality, calling to God and propagating beneficial knowledge with sincerity for Allāh's sake is preferable than the persistent performance of devotional acts like supererogatory prayers and [divine] remembrances (*al-ʿibādāt al-lāzima min nawāfil al-ṣalawāt wa al-adhkār*). [This is because] in

> knowledge there are benefits that fulfill the needs of the elites and the masses, the young and the old. In the *ḥadīth* [it is stated]: "The primacy of the knowledgable person over the worshipper is like my primacy [the primacy of the Prophet] over the lowest of my companions." And in another *ḥadīth*: "the primacy of a knowledgable person over a worshipper is like the primacy of the moon in plenitude over the stars" (*Ibid*: 24-5).

In al-Ḥaddād's view, even a *faqīḥ* (jurist), whose role usually consisted of issuing legal opinions on matters of public concern and teaching students (most of whom hailed from scholarly families) aspiring to be legal experts, ought to engage in proselytization:

> It is imperative that every mosque in a town is filled with a *faqīḥ* (someone learned in legal matters) who teaches people their religion. The same goes for every village. And it is incumbent on every *faqīḥ* to take some time off of his teaching duties and perform the *fardh al-kifāya,* namely: to go out and visit the common people (*ahl al-suwād*) who live in the neighboring areas like the bedouins, the Kurds, and others, and teach them their religion and religious duties.[51] He should bring his own provisions and not consume their food, for most of their food is of questionable legal status (*shubha*) and is accrued unlawfully (*maghṣūba*) (*Ibid*: 36).

Al-Ḥaddād thus attempted to efface the line distinguishing scholars, saints, jurists, from the preachers (*dāʿī*, pl. *duʿāt*). The passages quoted above further show how in al-Ḥaddād's perspective, religious authority does not stem from kinship ties, or from being the biological inheritors of deceased scholars or saints. Neither does it arise from leading an ascetic life or from the persistent performance of devotional acts. Religious authority, in his perspective, emerges

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[51] Islamic law distinguishes obligatory religious duty into two categories: the *fardh al-ʿayn,* indispensable individual duty every Muslim is required to perform, and the *fardh al-kifāya*, duty imposed on the whole community, in which an individual is no longer required to perform as long as there are sufficient members of the community doing it. The five obligatory prayers or fasting during the holy month of Ramadan are examples of the *fardh al-ʿayn*. The duty of performing prayer on the dead is an example of *fardh al-kifāya*. As long as there are community members who perform prayer on the dead, other members are absolved from this duty. In al-Ḥaddād's discussion, teaching and learning basic religious sciences is *fardh al-ʿayn*, while traveling and proselytizing to the hinterlands and tribal territories is *fardh al-kifāya*.

from the ability to become *active connectors* between a standardized and codified Prophetic *sunna* and individual Muslims through active teachings and proselytizing.[52]

Al-Ḥaddād distinguishes between what he calls *ʿulamāʾ al-mutaḥaqqiqīn* (real scholars, or verifiers) who adhere to both the external and internal aspects of religion and call others to God, and *al-ʿulamāʾ al-mutarassimīn* (symbolic scholars), those who are only concerned with the mastery of scholastic sciences. In regards to the latter, al-Ḥaddād explains:

> Among the *al-ʿulamāʾ al-mutarassimīn* are those who preoccupy themselves with sciences that will only benefit themselves. These are not the sciences of *daʿwa* to Allāh and to His way. Nor do they remind [people of] Allāh, His days, His majesty, His rewards and punishments. The possessors of these sciences count themselves as knowledgable while describing others who do not share their state as ignorants. Among them are those who engage in the intricacies of theological science (*daqāʾiq ʿilm al-kalām*) together with their long-winded explanations, or legal knowledge regarding things that hardly happen and legal opinions that discuss such matters. Or those whose knowledge mainly pertains to instrumental sciences (*ʿulūm al-ālāt*) like linguistics and literary sciences. These sciences, and others like them, are not amongst the sciences of *daʿwa* to God and to His path *(ṭarīqahu*). They do not instill fear of meeting Him, or His rewards and punishments. Nor do they warn [people of] the importance of carrying out His commandments and neglecting his prohibitions. Even if they are still generally accounted as sciences, they do not fulfill people's needs in matters of religion and the hereafter… So, the word 'knowledgable' affixes to someone whose knowledge is limited

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[52] Al-Ḥaddād's strong stance in this matter seems to have provoked initial strong reactions among the established Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabs*. During my fieldwork in Tarīm in 2006, I heard a story related to me on numerous occasions on why there is no mausoleum for a celebrated figure like al-Ḥaddād. Zanbal, the Bā ʿAlawī cemetery in Tarīm where al-Ḥaddād is buried have three mausoleums belonging to the ʿAydarūs family. Al-Ḥaddād's grave, however, only has a concrete canopy (*saqīfa*). The story explains that when al-Ḥaddād passed away, his family and disciples wanted to build a proper mausoleum for him. The plan, however, was aborted when the ʿAydarūs *manṣab* and family members — who for long held the paramount religious authority in the city — threatened to demolish the planned mausoleum. Another story recounts the conversation between the *manṣab* of the āl-Shaykh Bū Bakr, the ruler of the *ḥawṭa* of ʿInāt, and al-Ḥaddād, in which the former disapproved of the latter's attempt in changing the established Bā ʿAlawī practices:

Manṣab:	are you trying to be like my grandfather Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim?
Al-Ḥaddād:	who gave your grandfather his lofty spiritual station?
Manṣab:	Allāh of course!
Al-Ḥaddād:	Can the one who gave such a station to Shaykh Abū Bakr gives it to me?

Thereupon the *manṣab* left al-Ḥaddād.

If these two stories are historically accurate then it points to the initial rejection of al-Ḥaddād's teachings by powerful Bā ʿAlawī saintly families whose spiritual authority he censured. As one of the stations of pilgrimage (*ziyāra*) in Zanbal as meticulously described by Engseng Ho (2006: 200- 212) al-Ḥaddād's tomb is probably a recent addition, dating back to around the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, when the Ḥaddādian perspective became the established and defining paradigm of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*.

> to the sciences that have no benefit to, and importance in religion, is only symbolic without any corresponding reality (*ṣūratan lā ḥaqīqatan lahā*). His knowledge may even be the cause of the anger of his Lord, the destruction of his self, and the withering away of his hereafter (*Ibid:* 26-7).

In contrast, al-Ḥaddād defines beneficial sciences as those that fulfill the religious needs of both the elites and the masses and induce the cultivation of piety in them:

> As for the knowledge that brings benefits to both the elites and the masses is the knowledge that calls from this world to the next, and from vices to devotions, and from absent-mindedness to full awareness. Conveying it should be accompanied with admonition (*al-waʿiẓ*), reminders (*al-tadhkīr*), instilling fear (*takhwīf*), and warning (*al-taḥdhīr*). It should also be accompanied by explanations (*bayān*) of rewards and punishments (*al-waʿd wa al-waʿīd*): the kinds of reward that Allāh prepares for the people of devotion and virtue (*iḥsān*), and the kinds of punishments for the people of wickedness (*al-isāʾah*) and disobedience (*al-ʿiṣyān*), in accordance to what Allāh has prescribed as explained in the verses of the Qurʾān and in the words of His Prophet who was sent with guidance and explanations. Such explanations soften the hearts and make them fearful. They censure the egos and crush their pride (*takhḍaʿ*). Allāh says: "from each community, a group should go out to gain understanding of the religion, so that they can teach their people when they return so that they can guard themselves against evil" [Q. 9: 122]. In the *ḥadīth,* it is said that Ḥanḍalah (Allāh be pleased with him) told the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him): "when we are with you, you remind us about heaven and hell until it is as if we are able to see them with our own eyes, and that makes us mindful." You see how the Book of Allāh and the *sunna* of His Prophet are replete with incitement of desire (*al-targhīb*) and intimidation (*al-tarhīb*), announcement of glad tidings (*al-tabshīr*) and warnings (*al-taḥdhīr*), in Qurʾānic verses and *ḥadīth*s that discuss and explain rulings (*al-aḥkām*) (*Ibid*: 20-1).

In other words, beneficial knowledge is one that introduces people to their basic religious requirements. Beneficial knowledge is implementable in everyday life and is not just purely discursive. The link between knowledge and practice is provided by the proselytizers who employ and imitate rhetorical devices used in the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* — like *targhīb, tarhīb, tabshīr,* and *taḥdhīr* — to instill emotional states like fear, humility, regret, awe, and induce desires for reforming oneself and attaining success in the hereafter. From this perspective, *daʿwa* is a form of communication that invokes the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* iconically and indexically

into the here-and-now interpersonal interaction. As we will see in the next chapter, the stress on imitating the rhetorical devices of the Qurʾān or the *ḥadīth* can generate discursive ambiguities that enable the emergence of an enunciative position that instantiates a particular understanding of sainthood.

Al-Ḥaddād further divides beneficial sciences into two categories: the sciences of *īmān* or faith (*ʿulūm al-īmān*) that deal with theological knowledge, and the sciences of *islām* (*ʿulūm al-islām*)that revolve around practical knowledge. Here is al-Ḥaddād's explanation:

> One who aspires to tread the path of Allāh (*sulūk ṭarīqillāh*) should learn the sciences of *īmān* and *islām* that can rectify his belief and knowledge of Allāh the mighty and the strong, and knowledge of His attributes. Also [his belief and knowledge] of the prophets and the day of judgement. Among the sciences of *islām* is the knowledge of [performing] purification, prayer, fasting, alms, and hajj. In general, one ought not to perform devotional and customary acts like marriage and economic transaction until one knows Allāh's laws on such matters. Otherwise, he will fall into committing sins with or without him knowing, and there is no dispensation for that.
>
> In learning the sciences of *imān*, it is sufficient for him to learn the *ʿaqāʾid* (creeds) composed by the imams whose knowledge, trustworthiness, and devotion have been agreed upon, like the Proof of Religion (*ḥujjat al-islām*) [al-Ghazālī]. His creed, written in the beginning of the chapter "Foundation of Belief" (*qawāʿid al-ʿaqāʾid*) in the book *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (Revivification of Religious Sciences), is adequate and final for this purpose (*kifāya fī dhalika wa nihāya*). We have also presented an abridged but thorough creed in the beginning of *Itḥāf al-sāʾil* and in the epilogue of *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-dīniyya*.[53] This is sufficient for the devout seeker (*li-l-sālik al-nāsik*).
>
> As for the sciences of *islām*, which can be translated as sciences of the laws, it is sufficient for the seeker to learn what has been conveyed by the Proof of Religion — Allāh's mercy upon him — in *Bidāya al-hidāya* (The Beginning of Guidance), except that this book does not discuss the needed sciences pertaining to alms and hajj. Nevertheless, he (Ghazālī) has discussed these sciences in the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn.* It is also adequate for the devout to learn from what has been discussed by the most learned jurist ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥāj Abī Faḍl — Allāh's mercy upon him — in the book *al-Mukhtaṣar al-laṭīf* (The Delicate *Mukhtaṣar*). If he needs more, then he can examine his *al-Mukhtaṣar al-kabīr* (The Big *Mukhtaṣar*) that has been subjected to a commentary by Shaykh Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-Haytamī, Allāh's mercy upon him…

[53] *Itḥāf al-sāʾil bi-jawāb al-masāʾil* (Bestowing Answers on the Enquirer) and *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-dīniyya wa-l-waṣāya al-īmāniyya* (Religious Advice and Counsels of Faith) are the titles of two of al-Ḥaddād's works. The first was written in 1072/1662 and the second in 1089/1678.

> Deepening and widening (*al-tabaḥur wa-l-ittisāʿ*) of one's grasp of the sciences is not considered as an indispensable duty for everyone (*fardh al-ʿayn*). Rather, it is specific to those who have the time and skill for it, like the leaders and the learned of the religion (al-Ḥaddād 1994: 71-2).

Central to the Ḥaddādian project was the promulgation of a systematized curriculum that allowed the reproduction of a standardized doctrine and practice needed for the constitution of a duplicable and extendable *jamāʿa*. As al-Ḥaddād himself made clear, two genres of textual mediators made this possible: the *ʿaqāʾid* (creed) and the legal *mukhtaṣar* (abridgment).

The significance of the creed as a semiotic form that aligns theological propositions and social formation through the performance of individual assent (what in Islam is called *taṣdīq*) has been discussed by Webb Keane (2007). The creed is a portable and intimate mode of objectification that ensures the circulation of religion — at least its propositional content —, allowing it to be extracted from one context and inserted into others. Creeds articulate "public doctrine and subjective experiences" whilst bringing together elites and laypersons, thereby "creating semiotic forms that can circulate across an indefinitely wide range of contexts, and that make doctrine available, impressive, morally commanding, and above all, part of an inhabitable world" (Keane 2007: 68).[54] The creed consists of a particular kind of statement that is attached to a performance of assent. It treats "interior belief not as sufficient" and "publicly represents the speaker as taking responsibility for his or her own thoughts," thereby facilitating "a disciplinary practice that tends toward bringing inner thoughts into line with public doctrine" (*Ibid*: 71-2). As a semiotic form, the creed challenges speakers to be responsible for aligning their words with

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[54] "The creed paradigm," as Keane describes it

> gives doctrine an explicit form; it tends to place the primary locus of religion in the believer, not institutions; it dwell on differences among religions; and by taking textual form, it makes religion highly portable across context. The circulation of modular forms such as creeds works against the localizing forces (2007: 69).

their thoughts, thereby making it a model for a publicly perceivable notion of sincerity. In doing so, it reinforces a standardized notion of *jamāʿa*, made up of free and self-conscious agentive subjects while reaffirming, quite paradoxically, these subjects reliance on material objects like creedal texts.

If creeds conjoins a standardized theological doctrine and subjective belief, the *mukhtaṣar* mediates the emergence of a common standard of practice. A legal *mukhtaṣar* usually denotes either a condensation of a larger Islamic legal text, or a synopsis of authoritative legal positions of a particular school of law. Apart from their concise and synoptic format, a key characteristic of the *mukhtaṣars* is their univocality. Unlike the larger heteroglossic legal tomes consulted by the jurists and studied in institutions of higher Islamic learning, there are no juristic disagreements in the *mukhtaṣars*. They simply consist of one definite legal ruling for each case or matter of concern, a ruling that is presented in an accessible and straightforward manner. The genre arose in the 7th/13th century to address the problem of legal indeterminacy in Islamic law. It does so by facilitating *taqlīd*, or imitation, whereby an individual follows the the legal views or opinions of an established school of law codified in the *mukhtaṣars*, rather than following the opinion of a qualified *mujtahid,* a scholar able to perform legal inferences from the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth*.[55] As such, Islamic law became less reliant on the discretion of legal officials, whether judges or *muftis* (Fadel 1996: 198). Both the *Mukhtaṣar al-laṭīf* and *Mukhtaṣar al-kabīr* (also known as

[55] *Taqlīd* has been commonly viewed as a negative phenomenon that "reflected the uncertainty of Muslim jurists regarding the originality of their legal minds" (Hallaq 1984: 689). Weber for instance argued that the triumph of *taqlīd* rigidified Islamic law as "ideal code," prevented the development of an Islamic formal law, and stunted the formation of an Islamic rational-legal authority foundational to the development of capitalism (Weber 1978: II, 976). Such a common view, however, has been challenged in recent works. Sherman Jackson (1996), for one, explains the rise of *taqlīd* as the jurists' attempt to limit the manipulation of the legal system by the government. Mohammad Fadel suggests that *taqlīd* is an "expression of the desire for regular and predictable legal outcomes, akin to what modern jurisprudence terms the 'rule of law' the ideal that legal officials are bound to pre-existing rules" (1996:197). In Fadel's view, disparaging view of *taqlīd* stems from an idealist approach to the study of law without taking into consideration the institutional context within which it develops (*Ibid*: 195).

Muqaddimah Ḥaḍramiyya or *Kitab Bapadal* in Java) listed by al-Haddād present a codified and univocal Shāfiʿī law accessible to the general public.

Al-Ḥaddād's project can thus be perceived as an attempt to constitute a duplicable *jamāʿa* aligned to the *sunna as* codified into a common theological doctrine and legal rules. On top of this, he also composed two *rātibs*, or compilations of litanies/invocations, the *Rātib al-shahīr* (The Renowned Litany) and the *Wird al-laṭīf* (The Gentle Invocation), each being a compilation of Qurʾānic verses, prayers, and invocations prescribed by the Prophet, to be recited in the morning and evening. The two litanies are compact and easily memorized. Normal recitation only takes fifteen to twenty minutes, thereby allowing people to recite them once or twice a day without disturbing their daily activities. Such a character is crucial in making the *sunna* practicable and inhabitable within a mundane way of life. The objective of compiling a *rātib* is to facilitate a guided recitation that enables the general population to memorize and practice Prophetic invocations and derive spiritual benefits without having to burden them with the daunting task of finding such invocations from the Qurʾān or the voluminous *ḥadīth* compendia. The *rātib*, as Anne Bang has suggested, is also uniquely understood as a combination of something accessible, standardized, and easy that can be recited collectively, and simultaneously as a text that contains esoteric and mystical meanings that can only be accessed by the elites (2014: 148). This allows *rātib* to become a textual technology that can bring together those who

are considered the elites and the masses through the ritual of recitation.[56] Subsequently, the two *rātibs* became the defining litanies of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* and are recited in different places throughout the Indian Ocean (Bang 2014).

The dissemination of the *ʿaqāʾid*, the *mukhtaṣar*, and the *rātib* therefore became the means for constituting a *jamāʿa* that revolves around a standardized form of belief, practice, and worship. These semiotic forms encapsulate a codified and determinate notion of the Prophetic *sunna* that ought to be emulated by every Muslim. They work to limit theological, legal, and devotional indeterminacy and heterogeneity, and work against localizing forces by allowing doctrines and teachings to be extracted from one context and inserted into others. At the same time, they generate asymmetrical relations by opening up the space for the emergence of actors who can explain, contextualize, or even simply lead the recitation of these texts in diverse interactional settings.

Al-Ḥaddād refers to this form of religious authority as *shaykh al-taʿlīm*, or instructing teacher who conveys knowledge by following an established curriculum of study (al-Ḥaddād

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[56] Shahab Ahmed correctly points out that the notion of social hierarchy in relation to knowledge and truth — such as the notion of "higher and lower levels of Truth and Meaning" (2016: 368) is central to Islam. Such a notion is embedded in the idea of cosmological hierarchy relating to revelation as higher truths sent down to the lower world. This cosmological hierarchy posits differentiations between the higher/Unseen/unrevealed and the lower/seen/revealed Truths. Such a cosmological hierarchy

> transposes itself logically into the corresponding *social notion* that humanity and human society is composed of a hierarchy of more- and less-Truth-proficient human souls. This hierarchy of more- and lee-Truth proficient souls is, quite simply, a hierarchy of *classes of persons in society*. It is a class hierarchy constituted not by material wealth of political power, but relative to the capacity to *know Truth* (Ahmed 2016: 368).

As such, when conceptualizing and analyzing Islam, one ought to be mindful of the "hierarchical consequences of revelation" (Ahmed 2016: 377). As a textual technology, the *rātib* allows both the elites and the masses to participate in its ritual recitation while still differentiating the potential of meaning making based on one's capacity to know.

1993: 74). Pedagogical interaction with a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* centers on the content of the texts.[57] The authority of a s*haykh al-taʿlīm* follows from his ability to *connect* the Prophetic *sunna* — as codified in the *ʿaqāʾid, mukhtaṣar*, and *rātib* — and individual Muslims, who in the process are configured into a collective actuality, a *jamāʿa*. Finally, it should be noted that as a project directed towards social formation, the Ḥaddādian paradigm was not oriented towards militant political action or violent takeover of the state. Rather, it was concerned with advocating individual responsibility and minimizing collective indeterminacy through the propagation of a common theological, ethical, and devotional code accessible to self-conscious agentive subjects.[58]

The Axial Saint of Guidance

Al-Ḥaddād can be accurately designated as a *paradigmatic saint* (Cornell 1998), meaning, one who establishes a new figuration of religious authority, which subsequently becomes the model of and the model for sainthood itself. Apart from his literary works, al-Ḥaddād's legacy resides in

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[57] Al-Ḥaddād differentiated *shaykh al-taʿlīm* from *shaykh al-riyāḍa,* or training teacher (al-Ḥaddād 1993:74). The teaching relationship with the latter is one that centers on "training (*tarbiyya*) in action (*taṣrīf*) involving at times silence (*sukn*), charisma (*baraka*), and requiring a strong bond or connection (*rābiṭa*)" (Halman 2011: 36). Al-Ḥaddād also mentioned another type of teacher, what he called *shaykh al-faṭh* or unveiling teacher. This particular teacher is one who can open the spiritual path for seekers and bring them to God without them knowing (al-Ḥaddād 1993: 74), which seems to point to the kind of spiritual authority embodied by the charismatic figure of al-ʿAṭṭās and his claim to lead people to God "in an instant" discussed in the last chapter. He also suggested that the three kinds of pedagogues can converge in one person. Such a person can be aptly described as *shaykh al-muṭlaq* or absolute teacher (al-Ḥaddād 1993: 75). In this dissertation, I focus on the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* because this figuration of Islamic religious authority has become the most dominant and pervasive in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. In contemporary Indonesia, for instance, gatherings in which Islamic knowledge is transmitted is usually referred to as *majelis taklim* (Ar. *majlīs al-taʿlīm*), a social assemblage that revolves around the authority of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm*. While there are Sufi masters who perform the role of *shaykh al-riyāḍa* or training teacher, they tend to present such a role as secondary or as an addition to their role as *shaykh al-taʿlīm*. As such, it is important to understand the genealogy of this particular figuration of authority.

[58] This is by no means unique to the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyyā. Since* at least the sixteenth century, different Sufi *ṭarīqas* have placed a great emphasis on the law-abiding moral rectitude of the Sufi as a social role model for Muslims in general, an emphasis that made Sufism attractive to state administrators. Sufism as it developed in different parts of the Muslim world had grown into "a powerful idiom of collective organization and communal solidarity," which went hand in hand with the systematic attempts of several Islamic polities to demote "the nomadic, charismatic, and 'anarchistic' Sufism associated with rural tribal groups" (Green 2012: 175; See also: Kafadar 1995; Babayan 1994; Alam 2009).

a group of devoted students who were sent to live and preach in different places in Ḥaḍramawt. These students, inspired subsequent generations of *shaykh al-taʿlīm* who constituted *jamāʿas* aligned to the Ḥaddādian curriculum not only within Ḥaḍramawt, but also in distant places including the Swahili coast, India, and Java. Long-distance trade opened up the opportunity for extending the Ḥaddādian project and constituting *jamāʿas* in port-cities around the Indian Ocean, where al-Ḥaddād's successors introduced the figure of al-Ḥaddād and disseminated his books, poems, *rātib*, as well as his hagiography. Within these *jamāʿas*, al-Ḥaddād became known as the *quṭb al-irshād* and *quṭb al-daʿwa*, the axial saint of guidance and *daʿwa*.

Two developments in particular laid the groundwork for al-Ḥaddād's paradigmatic prominence. The first was the composition of his hagiography (*manāqib*) by his disciple Muḥammad b. Zayn bin Sumayṭ (d. 1172/1758), a native of Tarīm who was instructed by al-Ḥaddād to move to Shibam and proselytize in the surrounding area (Bang 2003: 37). Entitled *Ghāyat al-qaṣd wa al-murād* (The Goal of the Endeavor and Aspiration), Bin Sumayṭ's hagiography of al-Ḥaddād has been widely disseminated and can be found in almost all private libraries of Bā ʿAlawī scholars. The second development was the inclusion of al-Ḥaddād's tomb as one of the main stations in the ritualized pilgrimage of Zanbal (the Bā ʿAlawī cemetery in Tarīm) as formalized in pilgrimage manuals such as Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Junayd's (d. 1274/1858) *Marḥam al-saqīm fī tartīb ziyārāt turbat tarīm* (Salve for the Sickly in Organizing visits to Tarīm's Cemetery) and its subsequent renditions, such as the more popular *Minḥat al-ʿazīz al-karīm fī ziyārat awliyāʾ Tarīm* (Gift of the Generous Intimate for Visiting Tarim's Saints) by ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Mashhūr (d. 1319/1902) (Ho 2006: 200-211). Although not a

scholarly family, the āl-Shahāb family of Pekalongan discussed in the beginning of this chapter keeps beautifully written manuscripts of both works as family heirlooms (Figure 2.1 & 2.2).

(١٢٤)

استر عوراتنا وآمن روعاتنا ولا تسلط علينا من لا يرحمنا يا كهيعص نعوذ
بك من الذنوب التي توجب النقم الآخر كلام سيدنا علي ابن ابي طالب نفع الله به
ومن كلامه ايش راحة الدنيا انما الراحة في ذكر الله تعالى والعمل الصالح
ففي ذلك انشراح الصدر في الدنيا والثواب في العقبى ومن كلامه نظر
النبي علينا وعليكم ونظر الله على الجميع وقال من ادعى انه غريب مع الله او
مع اهل الله فكذبوه انما هو غريب مع نفسه وشهواته ولعل قال احفظوا
او اكتبوا وقال اليوم الطالب والمطلوب محجوبات وانما حجاب المطلوب
نوراني وحجاب الطالب ظلماني هذا زمان حجاب ومن كلامه عظ الناس
بالدنيا ولا تعظهم بالآخرة فلا يلقوت لها كبير قدر انتهى النقل عن السيد
عمر المذكور وبه انتهى خاتمة الباب والله الهادي للصواب
واليه المرجع والمآب وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد
وآله وصحبه خير صحب وآل والحمد لله
رب العالمين تم الباب السادس
من كتاب غاية القصد والمراد من
مناقب سيدنا قطب الارشاد الحبيب عبد الله بن علوي الحداد تاليف
سيدنا الامام جمال الدين محمد بن زين بن علوي بن سميط علوي
نفع الله بالجميع
وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه وسلم انتهى كتابة ذلك على يد
احقر العباد اجمعين عبد الرحمن بن عيدروس بن احمد بن شهاب الدين
غفر الله له ولوالديه واعاد عليه من بركات اهله واسلافه وجميع عباد الله الصالحين
آمين اللهم آمين وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين بتاريخ صباح يوم
الاحد لعله اربع عشر من شهر شوال
سنة ١٣٥٨

Figure 2.1: A page from a 1358/1939 manuscript of *Ghayat al-qaṣd wa al-murād*

Figure 2.2: The front page of an undated manuscript of *Minḥat al-ʿazīz al-karīm*

Between the history of a Ḥaḍramī reformer who attempted to constitute a standardized and duplicable *jamāʿa*, and the daily ritual practice held at the āl-Shahāb's *langgar,* a story remains to be told. It is a story of how the Ḥaddādian paradigm took root in Indonesia.[59] To tell this story, we need to go back to early nineteenth-century Java, to the period shortly following the Java War discussed in the last chapter. This was a time when things were falling apart, when a historically situated alignment between an articulation of the Prophetic *sunna* and an established *jamāʿa*, mediated by the *kraton* was disintegrating. Not unlike al-Ḥaddād's Ḥaḍramawt, this was an era when the political center — the *kraton* as embodied in the figure of the *panatagama* (the regulator of religion) who connected the *sunna* to a Javanese *jamāʿa* — no longer held. At the same time, it was an era of economic prosperity for the Ḥaḍramī entrepreneurial diaspora of British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. To present a contextualized glimpse of this story, I follow the travels of a Bā ʿAlawi scholar, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar bin Yaḥyā (Ibn Yaḥyā) (1209/1794-1265/1849) and his attempt to constitute a Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* in Java.

In the Land below the Winds

Ibn Yaḥyā was born in Ghuraf āl-Shaykh, a town located at the opening of the Masīla valley not far from Tarīm in 1209/1794. He studied under his two maternal uncles — Ṭāhir (d. 1229/1814)

[59] It should be noted that al-Ḥaddād himself was connected to at least one scholar from the Indonesian Archipelago. This was made clear to me from a passage in al-Ḥaddād's *al-Nafāʾis al-ʿuluwiyya fī al-masāʾil al-ṣūfiyya* (The Sublime Treasures concerning matters of Sufism). The passage contains al-Ḥaddād's answer to a question regarding the existence of another spiritual station (*maqām*) between what is usually considered as the highest spiritual station, that of the *al-siddīqiyya* and prophecy. Al-Ḥaddād replies:

> There are different views in regards to this matter. the gnostic Shaykh (*al-shaykh al-ʿārif*) Muḥammad Ibn ʿArabī, the author of *al-Futuḥāt* says that between these two, there is another station known as the station of *al-qurbah* (intimacy). He has written a short treatise explaining this matter and we have seen it and it has been read to us (*quriʾu ʿalaynā*) in Taʿizz, Yemen. The reader was a man of knowledge and Sufism named Yūsuf al-Jāwī, and he is amongst our friends (*wa huwa min aṣḥābinā*) (1993: 144).

The Yūsuf al-Jāwī mentioned in this passage is none other than the famous Makassarese scholar Shaykh Yūsuf Tāj al-Khalwatī (d. 1110/1699) who became the Shaykh al-Islam of the Sultanate of Banten and together with its ruler, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, was involved in an armed struggle against the VOC (Dutch East Indies Company) which was supporting Ageng's son, Pangeran Haji. Yusūf was exiled to Cape Town, South Africa where he died. See: Azra 2004: 87-108; Ward 2009: 199-237.

and ʿAbdāllāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir (1272/1855) — and other Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Ḥaḍramawt. By the time Ibn Yaḥyā was born, al-Ḥaddād's thought had become the dominant Islamic paradigm in Ḥaḍramawt, at least for the Bā ʿAlawīs. All of Ibn Yaḥyā's teachers were the students of al-Ḥaddād's disciples. Available biographical accounts further show how Ibn Yaḥyā's education primarily revolved around developing a mastery of a set of legal and sufi texts specified by al-Ḥaddād (al-Ḥabashī n.d.: I, 127; bin Yaḥyā 2008: 25-48; Ibn Yaḥyā n.d.). After an extended period of study, Ibn Yaḥyā gradually rose to become a noted scholar known for his mastery of Islamic law, in particular the Shāfiʿī legal school.

It is not exactly clear what drove Ibn Yaḥyā to embark on his travels to the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, as he himself never made it clear. One can only suggest a combination of both push and pull factors. The first was the protracted political instability in Ḥaḍramawt that drove his uncle Ṭāhir to lead a failed armed insurrection against the Yāfiʿīs (al-Shātirī 1981: II, 388-91; al-ʿAlawī 2002:132; Freitag 2003: 129). In the aftermath of the uprising, Ṭāhir was exiled from the Ḥaḍramawt valley. It may be the case that his nephew, who was implicated in the conflict, suffered a similar fate. At the same time, there was a pull factor from the Archipelago in the form of an increasing demand for Ḥaḍramī scholars to take on the position of religious instructors for the wealthy Ḥaḍramī diasporic community. For Ḥaḍramī scholars influenced by the Ḥaddādian emphasis on the urgency of *daʿwa*, the Archipelago presented itself as a new mission field.

Since at least the seventeenth century, the Ḥaḍramīs had begun to emigrate in increasing numbers to the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago; to the land "below the winds" (*taḥta al-rīḥ*) as Arab geographers have described it. Internal strife and limited opportunities in Ḥaḍramawt,

together with the ample economic opportunities abroad drove many Ḥaḍramīs to leave their homeland. Thriving port cities including Malacca, Kutaraja (Aceh), and several Javanese port cities were the preferred destinations for many. These cities became the bases where the migrants established trading ventures. Prior to the consolidation of British and Dutch colonization, the Bā ʿAlawīs had already established themselves in prominent positions in the regions, with some even assuming the position of sultan (Ho 2006).

Advances in maritime transportation in the early nineteenth century resulted in the increasing presence of the Ḥaḍramīs in the region (Feener 2010: 39-68; Gelvin & Green 2014: 1-24; Freitag 2003). The sphere of Ḥaḍramī mercantile activities was for the most part centered on the sea and the littorals. Shipping was their dominant economic activity until the middle of the nineteenth century. Beginning in the mid-1750s, Ḥaḍramīs specialized in sailing from Java to Palembang and Malacca, with an average ship size of over 50 tons.[60] This expanding world of Ḥaḍramī economic diaspora generated an increasing demand for *shaykh al-taʿlīms* from the homeland, who could provide basic religious instruction for the merchants, their families, and the community. Estranged from their homeland, the Ḥaḍramīs abroad were aspiring to be a *jamāʿa.* In order to do that, they needed connectors who could mediate their connection to the *sunna,* and thus the demand for religious instructors. Such a demand provided the impetus for the expansion of the Ḥaddādian paradigm in the diaspora. The expansion of the Ḥaddādian paradigm in Malaya and Java thus involved a reversal of agency. While in the Ḥaḍramawt expansion was facilitated by the active movement of *shaykh al-taʿlīms* around the valley and their attempt to call (*daʿwa*)

[60] William G. Clarence-Smith has noted that "from 22% of the registered tonnage of square-rigged ships in 1820, Arabs went to just over 50% in 1850, compared to 29% for the Chinese, 9% for the Dutch, 9% for the British, and 3% for 'natives'" (2009: 140).

others into following the *sunna* and establishing *jamāʿas*, in Southeast Asia, it was the people who actively call and invited Ḥaḍramī *shaykh al-taʿlīms* to come and connect them to the *sunna*.

Ibn Yaḥyā's first destination in Southeast Asia was Singapore, where he arrived in 1832. Since its establishment in 1819, Singapore had attracted merchants from various ethnic communities including Ḥaḍramīs from all over Malaya and the Indonesian Archipelago. Among them was the wealthy Bā ʿAlawī merchant, ʿUmar b. ʿAlī al-Junayd (d. 1269/1852), with whom Ibn Yaḥyā stayed. Al-Junayd had come to Singapore from Palembang shortly after Raffles established Singapore. He brought his accrued wealth from Sumatra and invested in Singapore, buying lands and developing properties that led to the substantial growth of his family's fortune. In 1820, he built what is today known as the first mosque in downtown Singapore. He was also in the habit of sending money for the maintenance and renovation of the tombs and mosques of the Bā ʿAlawī ancestors (al-Junayd 1994: 167-8, 178-80; Ho 2006: 82-3). At the same time, he frequently invited and sponsored Ḥaḍramī scholars to come and impart religious knowledge to his family and the community.[61]

During his stay in Singapore, Ibn Yaḥyā taught at al-Junayd's house. He also led the recitation of al-Haddād's *rātib* at al-Junayd's mosque. Several letters written to his son in Ḥaḍramawt, however, indicate that Ibn Yaḥyā was disappointed with the state of Islamic learning exhibited by the children of the Ḥaḍramī mercantile elites. In a letter to his son, Abū Bakr, Ibn Yaḥyā lamented how Bā ʿAlawī children in Singapore were not interested in Islamic sciences.

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[61] Among them was the jurist Sālim b. ʿAbdallāh bin Sumayr (d. 1269/1853), a proponent of the Ḥaddādian paradigm. Ibn Sumayr had migrated to Singapore several years before Ibn Yaḥyā and begun teaching there with the financial support of Al-Junayd. His study circle attracted students from Singapore and Java, who come to learn *ʿaqāʾid* and *mukhtaṣar* texts (al-Saqqāf 2005: 601-2; Berg [1886] 1989: 106). Ibn Sumayr authored his own *mukhtaṣar*, the *Safīnāt al-najāḥ* (The Ark of Salvation) that gradually became a popular legal primer in the Islamic boarding schools of Indonesia and Malaysia (Laffan 2011: 48; Bruinessen 1995a: 122).

They "developed the manners of the sinners (*al-fāsiqūn*) and took pride in sins and lusts" (Ibn Yaḥyā n.d.: 164). He implored his son not to even think of traveling to *Jāwah*:

> As for travel, we do not see in it religious nor worldly goodness. Nor will it result in ease. I have witnessed how the people of *jāwah* are in decrepit state in their worldly gains, and such a state is still in a better shape than their religious state. They constantly engage in sea voyage in perpetual rain, tempest, strong fear, and worries (*Ibid*: 165).

Proper education for the children of these merchant elites was a central concern for Ibn Yaḥyā. In a poem written during his stay in Singapore, he implores al-Junayd to send his children to Ḥaḍramawt for proper education, so that *they could become acquainted with the ṭarīqa of their ancestors* (*Ibid*.: 325). He also insisted that al-Junayd familiarize the children with al-Ḥaddād's *ratīb* by reciting it collectively. He feared that without proper education and ritual socialization, the children of these wealthy merchants would lose their attachment to the *ṭarīqa*. Indeed, the project of constituting a *jamāʿa* is a laborious endeavor that demands constant work.

From Singapore, Ibn Yaḥyā traveled to Java and visited the Ḥaḍramī mercantile elites there to impart religious instruction.[62] On the one hand he was proud of the fact that these wealthy Ḥaḍramīs were building infrastructures of religious worship and learning like mosques and *langgars,* as illustrated by a poem he wrote in 1833 commemorating the opening of a *langgar* built by one Ḥasan b. ʿAfīf (*Ibid*: 374-5). On the other hand, infrastructure was not sufficient to constitute a *jamāʿa*. There needed to be some degrees of willingness among actors involved to recognize and follow one or several connectors. And yet, as one of his letter makes clear, Ibn Yaḥyā only found moral deficiencies "even among the children of the *sayyids* and the *ʿulamā*" to the extent that "some of them did not practice the obligatory prayers!" (*Ibid*: 189).

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[62] One report from 1848 suggests that the Arab population in the coastal region was not large, but large enough to have significant impacts. In Tegal for instance, out of a total population of 317.446, there were at least 2.275 Arabs and other Asian Muslims (Ricklefs 2007: 81)

Ibn Yaḥyā attempted to facilitate religious learning by authoring simplified theological and legal texts. After all, the Ḥaddādian paradigm that he subscribed to is one that centers on the commitment to the constitution of a *jamāʿa* that revolves around a codified and accessible doctrine and practice. He wrote three short legal manuals on: (1) the correct performance (*manāsik*) of pilgrimage to Mecca, (2) the proper etiquette (*ādāb*) of visiting the Prophet's tomb, and(3) the righteous division (*tafrīq*) of alms. He also issued legal opinions (*fatwā*) on various issues he witnessed in the Malay-Indonesian world including the performance of *dabus*, payments of religious officials, alimonies, and the marriage between a woman from the Prophet's family and a non-*sayyid*.[63] He argued that imitating the fashion and language of the colonial rulers does not constitute apostasy as long as no religious commitment is involved.[64]

Ibn Yaḥyā also wrote a simplified creed on the meaning of the *shahāda* (the Islamic statement of faith). Entitled *ʿAqīda jāmiʿa nāfiʿa* (The Complete Beneficial Creed), Ibn Yaḥyā's creedal text is written in ways that easily facilitate oral recitation and dictation in gatherings:

> This is a complete and beneficial creed (*al-ʿaqīda al-jāmiʿa al-nāfiʿa*) that we posited to be good. We have instructed [or dictated] it to the masses (*talaqaynahā al-ʿammah*) during our visit to the island of Java after [the performance of the] obligatory prayers, together with [the recitation of] the *fātiḥa* [the first *sūra* of the Qurʾān], in order to teach the meaning of *imān* and *islām*. This creed is the foundation of knowledge and all rulings, and it is as follows:

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[63] *Dabus* is a dance with roots in Sufi tradition common in several places in Sumatra, Malaya, and Banten. The word *dabus* in Arabic means "iron awl with a handle." The Sufi dance was probably called *dabus* because it was performed with sharply pointed iron awls. After reaching a trancelike state, the dancers stab their bodies and arms with the awls without physically injuring themselves. See: Vredenbregt 1973: 302-20; Bruinessen 1995b: 165-199.

[64] The issue of Muslims adopting non-Muslim dress has long been a subject of intense debate among Muslim scholars. Central to this contention is the definition of *tashabbuh* (imitation) as stated in a saying attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad: "whosoever imitates a particular group, he is from among them" (*man tashabbaha bi qawm fā huwā minhum*). Some scholars argue that adopting European dress constitutes *tashabbuh* of non-Muslims and can lead to apostasy. The term *tashabbuh* refers to the adoption of customs and habits which are deemed to be peculiar to a particular group. According to this perspective, the adoption of dietary and sartorial habit constitutes *tashabbuh.* Learning a foreign language, however, does not constitute *tashabbuh*. Ibn Yaḥyā's opinion regarding the imitation of European fashion and language is thus more lenient than most scholars. In 1904, another Bā ʿAlawī scholar from the same family as Ibn Yaḥyā, Sayyid ʿUthmān (d. 1914), authored a small brochure forbidding Muslims from imitating European dress, like wearing a cravat. See: Kaptein 2014: 66, 137-8.

I testify that there is no God but Allāh. I know and believe firmly in my heart and I declare it to others that there is nothing worthy of worship in the whole existence save Allāh (*lā maʿbūd bi-ḥaqqin fī al-wujūd illa allāh*). And that He is the most self-sufficient (*al-ghaniyy*) and that everything else is in need of Him. He is characterized by all perfections and is pure and free from all shortcomings and [He is unlike anything] that crossed one's imagination (*wa mā khaṭara bi-l-bāl*). He does not need a partner, nor does he need an offspring. Nothing can be equated with Him in its essence, attributes, and deeds.

I testify that Muḥammad is a messenger of Allāh. I know and believe firmly in my heart and I declare it to others that our master Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh is the servant of Allāh and his messenger to all creation (*rasūlihi ilā kāfat al-khalq*). He was truthful in all he conveyed. It is obligatory for all creation to assent and follow him (*wa yujibu ʿala kāfat al-khalq taṣdīqihi wa mutābiʿatihi*). It is forbidden for them to regard him as a liar and deviate from him (*wa yaḥramu ʿalayhim takdhībahu wa mukhālifathu*). Whosoever regards him as a liar, verily he is a *ẓālim* (unjust) and *kāfir* (ignorant of God). Whoever deviates from him is an *ʿāṣi* (disobedient) and *khāsir* (loser). May Allāh grant us success in following him. May He bestow us provision to perfectly hold firm to his *sunna*. May He put us among those who resuscitate the regulations of his *sharīʿa,* terminate us in his religion, and resurrect us [in the hereafter] in his entourage, together with our parents and children, our brethren and lovers, and all Muslims. Amen. Peace and blessings upon our master Muḥammad, his family and companions. All praise to Allāh, the Lord of the universe (Ibn Yaḥyā n.d.: 227).

Note how this creed not only align theological propositions with the embodied performance of individual assent (*taṣdīq*), but also delineates the limits of the social formation it seeks to generate by defining those who are outside its boundary, namely, the unjust, the ignorant, the disobedient, and the losers. The creed also renders the performance of individual assent as a social act by framing it as a declaration not only to oneself but also to others. The *ʿAqīda jāmiʿa nāfiʿa* exemplifies a textual technology that facilitates the constitution of a *jamāʿa* by allowing the circulation of theological ideas, enabling consistency in the personal and inter-personal performance of assent, while outlining the discursive limits of the *jamāʿa*.

The expanding world of the Ḥaḍramī diasporic community thus facilitated the expansion of the Ḥaddādian paradigm by sponsoring Ḥaḍramī *shaykh al-taʿlīm* like Ibn Yāḥyā to give religious instructions to members of this prosperous community, especially their locally-born

children. Note that in the exclusive circles of the Ḥaḍramī diaspora, Ibn Yaḥyā introduced the Ḥaddādian paradigm as the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*, the way of the Bā ʿAlawī ancestors that ought to be followed by their progeny in the diaspora. The three textual genres of the *ʿaqāʾid*, the *mukhtaṣar*, and the *rātib,* preferred by al-Ḥaddād, became the means of constituting a *jamāʿa* that revolves around a standardized — and discursive — notion of belief, practice, and worship. These genres work against localizing forces by allowing a codified and determinate notion of Prophetic *sunna* to be extracted from previous contexts and deployed in subsequent interactions to generate new contexts. Ibn Yaḥyā's experience with the Ḥaḍramī community in Singapore and Java shows how as a social formation a *jamāʿa* needs effort. It needs money, movement of actors, infrastructure, and textual technologies. At the same time, lack of associations between these constitutive elements may prevent it from becoming a well-formed assemblage.

Crossroads and Religious Marketplace

While the estates and the *langgars* of the Ḥaḍramī entrepreneurs were the nodes that formed the itineraries of traveling Ḥaḍramī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* like Ibn Yaḥyā, these stations also afforded them with the ability to interact with a broader audience. After all, these stations were located in buzzing port-cities like Singapore, Betawi (Jakarta), Gresik, and Surabaya, where exchanges of merchandise, commodities, as well as ideas took place. In these emporia, the itineraries of Ḥaḍramī instructors intersected with other itineraries generating synergies, but also confrontations. To give a concrete example of how this worked, let us turn to Surabaya where Ibn Yaḥyā stayed for a period of time at the opulent homes of the Ḥaḍramī merchants and shipowners in the Arab quarter. The Arab quarter of Surabaya was built around the mosque and tomb of Sunan Ampel, one of the *wali songo*. As mentioned in the last chapter, this mosque is an

important pilgrimage site that has drawn constant visitors from different areas, making it into a hub where diverse networks intersect.

Being in close geographical proximity to the mosque allowed Ibn Yaḥyā to visit it regularly and interact with various people, not only his fellow Ḥaḍramīs but also Javanese scholars, pilgrims, and students. Perhaps one can imagine how, Ibn Yaḥyā, as a learned Ḥaḍramī *sayyid* commanded the respect of the people he encountered at the mosque. Fortunately, we do have a precious trace of such interactions in the form of a reminder (*tadhkira*) written by Ibn Yaḥyā upon the request of several Javanese pilgrims (*ḥujjāj*) who studied with him at the mosque of Sunan Ampel.[65] This document, which I have translated in its entirety in appendix B, provides a glimpse into Ibn Yaḥyā's attempt to constitute a Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* among the broader Javanese population. Similar to al-Ḥaddād's own exposition in the *Daʿwa al-tammā*, in this document Ibn Yaḥyā defines what he considers to be beneficial knowledge, sets a curriculum consisting of simplified *ʿaqāʾid* and *mukhtaṣar* — many of which were also listed by al-Ḥaddād — while prohibiting other texts, and provides a practical strategy of proselytization. For Ibn Yaḥyā what was needed in Java were *shaykh al-taʿlīm* who could instruct the masses about their basic religious obligations, rather than scholars working on labyrinthine theological and legal theories.

Ibn Yaḥyā himself led by example. He taught the *Sullam al-tawfīq* (Ladder of Success), a legal *mukhtaṣar* authored by his uncle and teacher, ʿAbdallāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir, to those gathered at the mosque of Sunan Ampel. In doing so, Ibn Yaḥyā assumed the role of a *connector* between his uncle's work and his students. He did not seem to take oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*) from the people, nor did he induct them into the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. In fact, the *ṭarīqa* itself is

[65] The original copy of this manuscript is kept in the Markaz al-Noor archive in Tarim, Ḥaḍramawt. I thank Zayd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Yaḥyā for providing me with a copy of this precious document.

nowhere mentioned in the document. While such formal elements have historically functioned to generate a sense of both vertical and horizontal identity and solidarity, they were not the only mechanism of reproducing a *jamāʿa*. Here we see how Ibn Yaḥyā was more preoccupied with redefining the canon of permissible texts, consisting, among others, of several key texts of the post-Ḥaddādian *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*'s curriculum — as boundary markers that define a permissible textual canon built on the exclusion of other texts. This curriculum functioned as a conceptual apparatus that allowed the reproduction of a standardized doctrine and practice even without formally configuring it as a *ṭarīqa*. Ibn Yaḥyā seems to disapprove the existence of *jamāʿa* that revolve around those who "occupy themselves with teaching and giving legal opinion (*fatwā*) without the necessary knowledge and mastery". In contrast, he envisions a more homogeneous *jamāʿa* based on an accessible curriculum that codified the *sunna* into a systematic articulation of doctrine and practice. The form of religious authority pivotal to such a project is precisely that of *shaykh al-taʿlīm*, an authority that emerged from the act of textual transmission and instruction.

The mosque of Sunan Ampel was therefore a strategic site of knowledge production that enabled Ibn Yaḥyā to transmit the basic tenets of the Ḥaddādian paradigm — without defining it as *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* — to a broader audience. The widespread dissemination of this paradigm was further enhanced by two forms of mobility that intersected with the itineraries of Ḥaḍramī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* like Ibn Yaḥyā, especially in places like the Sunan's mosque. These were: the rise of the Javanese pilgrimage to Mecca and the movement of Muslim scholars away from the *kratons.*

The increase of Javanese pilgrimage to Mecca was enabled, among others, by the monetization of agricultural economy.[66] This resulted in flourishing trade, which allowed more Javanese to afford the cost of travel (Tagliacozzo 2013: 63-82). By the 1850s and 1860s, an average of approximately 1600 pilgrims set out from the Netherlands Indies annually, despite the colonial authority's attempt to discourage them from going (Ricklefs 2009: 114). In Mecca, they were exposed to diverse scholars teaching different texts. By the early 1800s, the works of Egyptian Sufi-oriented scholars, emphasizing the dissemination of simplified texts on legal and ethical guidance had begun to replace the earlier Shaṭṭārī-oriented Medinese tradition of Sufism with its emphasis on metaphysical teachings (Laffan 2011). Indeed, Shaṭṭārī Sufism was becoming unfashionable in Mecca, and Javanese pilgrims began to flock to the more "reformist" and *sharīʿa*-oriented *ṭarīqas* like the Sammāniyya, the Naqshabandiyya and the Qādiriyya wa Naqshabandiyya. Upon return to Java, many of these pilgrims challenged the social positions of established rural teachers — some of whom were affiliated with the older Shaṭṭārīyya — and attempted to carve their own *jamāʿas* by teaching the texts they had learnt in Mecca. What this entailed was the proliferation of connectors between various articulations of the *sunna* — as codified in various texts taught by different scholars in the "religious marketplace" (Green 2011: 47) of Mecca — and Javanese Muslims. In its turn, Java, like Mecca, also became a competitive

[66] Left with no serious competitors following its victory in the Java War discussed in the last chapter, the Dutch colonial state was able to focus on profit acquisition. The new Governor-General, Johannes van den Bosch (d.1844), enacted an agricultural reform plan to facilitate the extraction of agricultural products from Java in quantities and at prices that would make the Netherlands Europe's biggest supplier of tropical products, especially coffee (Van Niel 1972). The cultivation system helped the Dutch to rebuild Holland's economy following the ravages of the Napoleonic war and the Belgian secessionists. In Java, it led to a neo-feudalization, converting and buttressing a *priyayi* class of Javanese elites to colonial intermediaries (Sutherland 1979). The term *priyayi* originally referred to the younger siblings of the Javanese kings. Subsequently it came to denote the bureaucratic or administrative elite of Java.

religious marketplace, where multiple *jamāʿas* vied against each other, more so when state patronage and resources were rapidly diminishing.

One prominent forerunner of this trend was ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Palimbānī (d. 1203/1789), a Sumatran student of the Medinese Shaykh Muḥammad Sammān (d. 1189/1776). Sammān had cultivated links with Cairene tradition of Sufism that emphasized the writings of the medieval Sufi theologian and jurist Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111) and his Egyptian commentators like ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī (d. 972/1565).[67] Whilst in Mecca and Zabīd, al-Palimbānī became acquainted with the works of al-Ḥaddād and his disciples.[68] Al-Palimbānī's lasting legacy was his composition of a Malay-language curriculum for the study of Sufism consisting of around one hundred texts deemed important for those embarking on spiritual wayfaring.[69] In the curriculum, al-Palimbānī divides students of Sufism into three levels: beginners (*mubtadiʾ*), intermediate (*mutawaṣṣiṭ*), and advance (*muntahi*). For the beginners, he listed fifty works mostly dealing with *ḥadīth*-derived ethical guidelines. Among others, he listed five of al-Ḥaddād's texts, including the previously discussed *Daʿwa al-tāmma*. For the intermediate he listed thirty books including various litanies and invocations, as well as the texts authored by the pre-Ḥaddādian Bā ʿAlawī scholars like ʿAbdallāh b. Abī Bakr al-ʿAydarūs (d. 865/1461) and Shaykh Abū Bakr b. Sālim (d. 991/1584). As for the advanced, al-Palimbānī mentions twenty books on philosophical Sufism, including the works of controversial scholars like Ibn ʿArabī, al-Jīlī, and of course the Shaṭṭārī *al-Tuḥfa*.

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[67] On al-Shaʿrānī's role in the reconfiguration of Sufi thought see: McGregor 2005: 380-394.

[68] Bruinessen (1995a: 64) has noted that among al-Palimbānī's teachers was the Bā ʿAlawī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muṣṭafā al-ʿAydarūs (d. 1196/1782), a prolific scholar who studied with one of al-Ḥaddād's disciples, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAbdallāh Bilfaqīḥ (d. 1173/1759). For more on al-Palimbānī's years in Zabid see: Feener & Laffan 2005; Feener 2015.

[69] For a transcription of al-Palimbānī's curriculum, see: Bruinessen 1995a: 71-87.

The second form of mobility, that of the movement of Muslim scholars away from the *kratons* was the result of the colonial state's attempt to distance the polity from the scholars. During the Java War, the Dutch had witnessed the devastation wrecked by the coalition of the Javanese princes, rural Islamic scholars, and the masses. In its aftermath, the colonial authority worked to isolate the *kratons* from both the masses and the influence of Muslim scholars. This was accomplished by cultivating a sense of "cultural remove" amongst the elites of the two *kratons*, by identifying "high Javanese culture as an entity standing in opposition to Islam and as the exclusive and conservative preserve of a hyper-refined elite class" (Florida 1995: 24-5). It was, in other words, a colonial project of purifying the *kraton* from the various elements and entanglements that made up its discursive architecture.[70] It was an enterprise of rendering the *kraton* more akin to a European royal court than a *jamāʿa* aligned to the Prophetic *sunna* through the mediation of the *panatagama*. The mantle of the "regulator of religion" proudly worn by the rulers of Surakarta and Yogyakarta was becoming no more than a fancy title.

One consequence of this project was the movement of Muslim scholars — many of whom were involved in the Java War — away from the royal court into the countryside and the

[70] Nancy Florida describes this purification project as a form of conceptual denial of Islamic elements in the *kraton.* Such a project was cultivated in the new academic field of Javanology that "worked in the interest of the authorities to frame 'traditional Java' through a delineation of that tradition's genuine high culture" while positing Javanese culture "as standing in opposition to Islam" (Florida 1997: 193). Florida further shows how from the perspective of Javanology, the *kratons* were perceived "as the proper locus and preserve of that true Javanese high culture, a culture portrayed as an (almost) purely indigenous (Hindu-Buddhist) remainder, essentially untouched by the alien accretions of either Islam or the West" (Florida 1997: 193).

littoral as well as the *divergence of ways* between the *kraton* and the Muslim scholars.[71] The movement of the scholars away from the *kraton* resulted in the proliferation of new *pesantrens.*[72] The Great Post Road linking the western to the eastern tip of Java, completed in 1808, (Nas & Pratiwo 2002; Toer 2006) facilitated greater communication between *pesantrens* and revitalized the established educational tradition of students and scholars moving from one Islamic educational institution to the other. These *pesantrens* served as the sites of learning where new Islamic curricula — brought by the likes of al-Palimbānī — began to take shape. Influenced by the works of the Egyptian, Hejazi, and Ḥaḍramī scholars, these emerging curricula emphasized the dissemination of simplified theological *ʿaqāʾid*, legal *mukhtaṣar*, and Sufi treatises dealing with ethical guidance, while restricting the dissemination of the once desired speculative Sufi treatises — like the Shaṭṭārī *Tuḥfa* favored by Prince Dipanagara (see chapter 1) — to the scholarly elites. The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries thus witnessed the development and proliferation of new Islamic curricula throughout a considerable part of the Muslim world, including Java.

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[71] This, however, does not mean that Muslim scholars were not active in the countrysides prior to the Java War. Evidence suggests that they were already spread across the countryside and establishing *pesantrens*, like the famous *perdikan* of Tegalsari. Sources like the 1815 *Serat Centhini* suggest that the *kraton*, the countryside, and Muslim scholars were in dialogue. Similarly, one should not assume that the *kraton* was not actively involved in the *pesantren* of the countryside. Nancy Florida (1997) has shown how several key luminaries of the *kraton,* particularly the literati and court poets — including the veritable literati family of Yasadipura — were educated in rural *pesantrens.* In addition, when Chinese rebels overran the *kraton* of Pakubuwana II in 1742, the king fled the royal court and took shelter with the Islamic scholar Kyai Ageng Imam Besari of Panaraga, East Java. In other words, available historical sources suggest that (1) Muslims scholars were already active in the countryside prior to the Java War; and (2) *kraton* luminaries were not imprisoned behind palace walls. Rather, there seems to be circulations of people and ideas between rural Islamic establishments and the *kratons*. As such, sharp division between the *kratons* and the *pesantrens* was the ideological effect of colonial project of purification in the aftermath of the Java War. Nevertheless, the end of the Java war did result in the proliferation of new *pesantrens* across Java.

[72] According to the colonial survey of education, Cirebon, Semarang, and Surabaya had the largest number of *pesantren*. In 1831, Cirebon had 190 with a total of nearly 2800 pupils and Semarang had 180 with a total of almost 3000 (Ricklefs 2007:52-3).

The intersection between the two aforementioned forms of mobility and the itineraries of Ḥaḍramī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* resulted in both the proliferation of multiple *jamāʿas* on the one hand, and their gradual standardization on the other. By the time L.W.C. Van den Berg (1887) compiled a list of fifty texts studied in the *pesantrens* of Java and Madura in 1887, a clear and consistent program of study was already discernible, albeit with slight variations from one institution to the next. These *pesantrens* had become sites of learning where simplified *ʿaqāʾid, mukhtaṣār,* and several texts on Arabic linguistic sciences made up the core curriculum.[73] These texts, and their subsequent commentaries, became the canonical codification of the *sunna*. *Ḥadīth* compilations and Qurʾānic exegeses— favored by twentieth century modernist Muslims — were nowhere to be found in the curriculum.[74] Treatises on jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqḥ*) that discuss approaches to deducing and extrapolating legal rulings from the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* were also missing. In the *pesantrens*, constituting a *jamāʿa* aligned to the *sunna* meant calibrating individuals to the virtual and partial model of the *sunna* — a *prêt-à-porter sunna*— as codified in these canonical texts.

Included in the curriculum were all the texts listed by both al-Ḥaddād and Ibn Yaḥyā, including the aforementioned *Sullam al-tawfīq* brought to Java by the latter. At least two of al-Ḥaddād's own works were included. This however does not signal a complete victory of the Ḥaddādian paradigm as the *Umm al-barāhīn* (Mother of Proofs) of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (d. 895/1490) that was explicitly prohibited by the Ḥaddādian scholars also remained central to the theological instruction at the *pesantrens*. Absent from the nascent curriculum were

[73] For a comprehensive list and discussion of these texts, see: Bruinessen 1995a: 112-171.

[74] One exception was the short and elementary Qurʾānic exegesis *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* composed by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and completed by his student Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūṭī (Bruinessen 1995a: 135).

the controversial works of Ibn ʿArabī, al-Jīlī, and the Shaṭṭārī *al-Tuḥfa*.[75] While not included in the core curriculum, devotional works and litanies like al-Ḥaddād's *rātib* also circulated in the *pesantrens,* where they were recited individually or collectively on certain ritual occasions. Run, almost exclusively by *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* — some of whom perform the extra-curricular role of being Sufi *murshids* — and geared towards equipping students with mastery over these limited textual canons, the *pesantrens* became the premier sites for producing *shaykhs al-taʿlīm*.[76]

Over time an increasing numbers of *pesantren* graduates spread all over Java and beyond, founding new *pesantren* in different places or instructing people in village *langgars*. Ever since, these *pesantren* graduates have remained to be important *connectors*, linking and translating the *sunna* to the people around them.[77] Their mastery of the *ʿaqāʾid* and the *mukhtaṣar* enabled them to constitute their own *jamāʿas,* which albeit sporadic and polychromatic, remained aligned to a standardized notion of belief, practice, and worship. Perhaps such a dynamic suggests a scalar

[75] Indeed, Nancy Florida's examination of manuscripts stored in the three royal libraries of Surakarta suggests that the composition of Shaṭṭārī oriented texts by the court's literati came to a near standstill with the end of the Java War, which suggest this development as a consequence of that war. Prince Dipanagara, his spiritual advisor, Kyai Maja, as well as many, if not most, of the Islamic teachers who supported the Prince were disciples of the Shaṭṭārīya. As such, affiliation with the Shaṭṭārīyya might had been seen by many as a liability. At the same time, the more "reformist" *Ṭarīqa* Naqshabandiyya was gaining momentum in Java, brought home by Javanese pilgrims and gaining a more popular following. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Shaṭṭārīyya Sufism had become unfashionable in Mecca. With this development, the works of Ibn ʿArabī, al-Jīlī as well as the Shaṭṭārī *al-Tuḥfa* gradually receded to obscurity. See: Florida forthcoming.

[76] While there remain today *pesantrens* that explicit identified themselves as centers of particular *ṭarīqas*, the presiding scholars usually perform the role of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* in their daily pedagogical activities. That is, students enrolled in the *pesantren* study different branches of Islamic science — including Arabic grammar and Islamic law — using standardized texts studied in most Islamic *pesantrens* in Java. Once or twice a week, however, these scholars give classes on Sufism and *ṭarīqa.* Such classes are usually open to the wider public and are not obligatory for the *pesantren* students. Only those with interest in Sufism attend these classes. In such classes, the presiding scholar of the *pesantren*, who usually performs the role of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* takes on another role, that of the directing shaykh. In other words, *ṭarīqa* is an extra-curricular activity in most *pesantrens* in Java. Exception can be made with educational institution known as *pesantren suluk,* usually affiliated with the Naqshabandī *ṭarīqa*. Such *pesantrens* are more akin to the *khanaqas* or Sufi monastery in that they specialize in providing Sufi disciples with a place for spiritual retreat where they can be mentored by a directing shaykh.

[77] One should not forget that the proliferation of multiple *jamāʿas* tied by a set of canonical texts also generated other connectors that I cannot discuss in this dissertation, namely, book publishers, printers, and sellers. Up to the Second World War, Ḥaḍramīs dominated this business. The Arab quarters surrounding the mosque of Sunan Ampel discussed in the last chapter became one of the main centers of this business.

model in which smaller *jamāʿas* are encompassed within larger ones, and those, in turn, in larger ones. These *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* are the acephalous capillaries that made up a living, growing, and interlinking social assemblage that in the early twentieth century became known and objectified by their modernist opponents as *traditional Islam* or *traditionalist Muslims.* The *traditionalist Muslims* themselves, however, prefer to identify themselves as the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jamāʿa*, the people of the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*.[78]

The Pekalongan Affair

In the last section I have shown how Ibn Yaḥyā's ability to transmit the Ḥaddādian paradigm to the broader Javanese audience was due, among other things, to the synergies between his mobility and other itineraries. The crisscrossing of different itineraries, connectors, and *jamāʿas*, however, can also lead to competition, confrontation, and even crises. During such moments, a *jamāʿa* as a social assemblage may face a disconcerting trial that may well lead to its disintegration. No matter how well-formed a *jamāʿa* is, it will always be a risky assemblage made up of heterogeneous elements and associations prone to disentanglement. A *jamāʿa* needs constant work. Its mode of existence hinges on its continuous inter-personal and inter-objective regimentation and performance. At the same time, it is always implicated by other actors, things, objects, and networks that are located outside of its discursive brackets and which may pose threats to its delicate existence. To illustrate this point I turn to Ibn Yaḥyā's final destination in Java, which is also the place where I began this chapter: Pekalongan.

Since the early nineteenth century, Pekalongan has had a large and prosperous Ḥaḍramī population. Among them was the Bā ʿAlawī family of Bin Yaḥyā — Ibn Yaḥyā's own family —

[78] To ease comprehension, I will retain the term *traditionalist Muslims*, while recognizing its limitation and its origin in early Twentieth Century polemics.

who had married into the Javanese aristocracy.[79] So it is not surprising that Pekalongan was among Ibn Yaḥyā's destinations. It was in Pekalongan that Ibn Yaḥya seemed to become competitively entangled with other itineraries — or perhaps other *jamāʿas* — leading to a confrontation that brought about the involvement of the colonial authorities, and consequently the break up of his own *jamāʿa*. Unfortunately, we do not have any traces of his activity in this coastal city save one letter addressed to his uncle ʿAbdallāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir, the author of the aforementioned *Sullam al-tawfīq*. Written from Trengganu, on the eastern coast of Malaya, on the first of March 1835, the letter provides a glimpse into what Ibn Yaḥyā described as the *qaḍiyat fakalunghān* (Pekalongan affair):

> From the first instance upon entering those lands, we were perceived like the soothsayers (*kuhhān*), who add a word or two of truth for every thousand lies to protect hypocrisy and status. And so our status in these lax lands was perceived in a similar way, in terms of lies and hypocrisy in speech, acts, and manners, because no one else has as much hypocrisy as they do. But even the liar could seem honest when he wants to implicate the biggest villain (*kibrā mujrimīhā*). They spoke with great lies and deceits (*al-buhtān)* to the infidels, and seduced them into thinking that I am [such a person] both explicitly and implicitly. But they were unable to accomplish what they sought to do. Nor were they able to achieve any of it. Instead they planted fear in the heart of the infidels with seduction and exaggeration. And so I became perceived as a complete army — a full infantry — frightening the infidels and worrying the hypocrites. They accused me of the greatest offense. They spoke of me as an unjust sower of discord (*fattān dhālim*). So when we arrived in Pekalongan, they attempted to imprison us, and so we turned to the *sayyids* (*sāda*) and the Arabs who were there. But we found great fear in their hearts. They kept convincing us to turn ourselves in. So we excused them from any assistance or victory. And we refused to turn ourselves to imprisonment. No one remained with us except the boy Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Bāfaqīh, who remained and refused to part with us. We did not have any weapons, while the leader of the infidels in that land mobilized around a thousand people to lay siege on the house. They remained there for seven days, while we were inside. Every night they attempted to attack the house, but every time they came close, they suddenly retreated. There were no boats belonging to the Arabs on the pier until the arrival of a boat belonging to the al-ʿAṭṭās family. So we traveled on it to

[79] One of the best known member of this family was the "father of modern Indonesian painting," Raden Saleh Syarif Bustaman. Raden Saleh's grandfather came from Ḥaḍramawt and married the daughter of the Bupati of Lasem. Raden Saleh's father was married with the daughter of the Bupati of Wiradesa. This family had a close connection to the Yogyakarta *kraton*. See: Kumar 1985: 14.

> Semarang and when we arrived there, they said: he [Ibn Yaḥyā] will not get off from that boat onto this land, for we fear mischiefs from him. And so we stayed [on the boat] for days and finally sailed to Singapore and Trengganu (Ibn Yaḥya n.d.: 196-7).

Ibn Yaḥyā's ambiguous description invites some speculations. It certainly points to the hostility exhibited by certain actors towards Ibn Yaḥyā's activity, although he himself does not specify what caused it. Ibn Yaḥyā's travel to Java certainly fits into an established history of religious divines coming from the central lands of Islam criticizing established practices. Perhaps it was his critical evaluation of these practices that angered some people, who then attempted to agitate the colonial authorities into perceiving him as a threat to the security of the realm. It is also possible that Ibn Yaḥyā's proselytizing activities worried rival Muslim teachers, who then cast him as an incipient danger to the state. Java was after all a competitive religious marketplace and often times competitions turn ugly.[80]

Whatever caused the incident, the consequence was clear. In a time of crisis, his Ḥaḍramī *jamāʿa* seemed to desert him save for one *sayyid* boy and an al-ʿAṭṭās shipowner. As sinister rumors began to spread, the mercantile Ḥaḍramī elites of Pekalongan chose to disassociate themselves from Ibn Yaḥyā, for fear of subsequent repercussions from the colonial authorities. This incident after all took place only five years after the conclusion of the Java War. It was a period marked by a heightened sense of colonial anxiety especially towards the devout Muslim populations, many of whom had been involved with Prince Dipanagara. Various local skirmishes

[80] A similar case happened to a mid-nineteenth century Javanese spiritual teacher, Hasan Mawlani, also known as Kyai Lengkong. Mawlani gradually attracted a large followings, including the sons of the Javanese elites, which according to Michael Laffan "raised the hackles of the rival gurus as much as it disturbed uncomprehending Dutch officials". Laffan adds that it is also likely that the rival gurus "saw to it that accounts of these teachers' activities were cast as an incipient danger to the state". In 1842, Mawlani was sent into life exile in Tondano, North Sulawesi. It is highly possible that Ibn Yaḥyā experienced similar conflicts to that later on faced by Mawlani. See: Laffan 2011: 52.

under the banner of Islam and messianic movements continued to haunt the colonial state in the years following Ibn Yaḥyā's departure from Java.

The Pekalongan affair illustrates the risks associated with the project of constituting a *jamāʿa,* more so in a thriving religious marketplace made up of various itineraries, networks, and entanglements. A *jamāʿa* is a volatile assemblage made up of heterogeneous connections and linkages that make up its strength, but also its frailty. If Ibn Yaḥyā's description is accurate, then what we see in the Pekalongan affair is precisely how the networks that made up a *jamāʿa* became associated with other networks that made up the colonial state through rumors produced by a group of actors, who in this case acted as connectors between the two networks. One might say that the consequence of this association was the disintegration of Ibn Yaḥyā's *jamāʿa*. One can also say that the *jamāʿa* was only trimmed as Ibn Yaḥyā was still connected to one or more actors. This, however, was not enough to establish a mechanism that could secure the longevity of his name as a connector who once attempted to constitute a Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* in Java. While the text he brought and the curriculum he helped to formulate remain in currency, Ibn Yaḥyā did not leave behind a named successor, institution, or even a tombstone.

Conclusion

This chapter begins with a site of learning and worship, a *langgar* that stands proudly at the center of the decaying mansions of a once prosperous Ḥaḍramī mercantile family of Pekalongan. At the *langgar*, I witnessed a modest *jamāʿa* reciting al-Ḥaddād's creed and *rātib*. The leader of the *jamāʿa* was not a scholar skilled in the scholastic sciences. Nor was he a Sufi master learned in spiritual subtleties. Abdurrahman was simply a prayer leader of a *langgar*, a scion of the mercantile family who makes ends meet by operating a small shop at the market. Such a sight is

not unique to that particular *langgar*. Traveling around former Arab quarters of Java, from Pasuruan to Bangil, Malang to Gresik, Surabaya to Solo, Bogor to Jakarta, I visited numerous *langgars* where I found similar Bā ʿAlawī prayer leaders, young and old, performing the same role. Their *jamāʿas* are not only their fellow Ḥaḍramīs but also those who have been described as *traditionalist Muslims* who live around the *langgars*. How do we comprehend these multiple, but clearly connected and overlapping social assemblages? What kinds of subtle and supple tissue binds them? How did this particular form of religious authority came about?

Tracing these associations led me to an eighteenth-century Ḥaḍramī reformer and his project of constituting a duplicable notion of *jamāʿa* by advocating individual responsibility and minimizing collective indeterminacy through the propagation of a common theological, ethical, and devotional code accessible to self-conscious agentive subjects. Such a social assemblage demands connectors who can mediate between the Prophetic *sunna* as codified in the *ʿaqāʾid, mukhtaṣar*, and *rātib* and individual Muslim, who in the process become constituted as a *jamāʿa*. Described by al-Ḥaddād as *shaykh al-taʿlīms,* such religious instructors range from graduates of *pesantrens* who are able to teach and explain the intricacies of these texts, to shopkeepers who can only lead recitations, help children to memorize the twenty divine attributes (*sifat dua puluh*) and teach them how to perform the ritual ablution based on their comprehension of elementary *mukhtaṣars.*

I have further shown how the Ḥaddādian paradigm was extended to Java through the works of traveling Ḥaḍramī scholars who assumed the role of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* to the Ḥaḍramī mercantile elites and their families. Being at the center of a vibrant religious marketplace allowed these scholars to form sociality with those outside the narrow circles of the Ḥaḍramī

diasporic elites. Gradually, several crucial elements of the Ḥaddādian paradigm were absorbed along with other elements from Javanese, Egyptian, and Hejazi traditions, into a nascent standardized Islamic curriculum adopted by the *pesantrens* of Java, and these institutions became the premier production sites for future *shaykh al-taʿlīms*. Ḥaddādian ideas thus survive concurrently in a more exclusive and pedantically Ḥaḍramī form — as the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* — among the Ḥaḍramī diaspora on the one hand and in a more inflected and blended form among what came to be known as traditional Islam of Java.

There is, however, one remaining question left out in this chapter. How did al-Ḥaddād, the reformer turned axial saint of *daʿwa* became a model for subsequent Bā ʿAlawī sainthood? If the authority of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* is one that emerges from the act of textual transmission and curricular-based instruction, how can this become a foundation for sainthood? In the next chapter we turn from the inter-personal and inter-objective gatherings that constitute a *jamāʿa* to the heteroglossic complexities that constitute a particular human actor as an authoritative connector.

Chapter III

Shimmering Intersections

And thou threwest not when thou didst throw, but God threw

-*The Holy Qurʾān, The Battle Gains* (8:17)

The glass is clear, so is the wine.
It's an enigma; the two are similar.
As if there is wine with no glass,
Or there is glass with no wine.

-Ṣāḥib b. ʿAbbād (d. 384/995)

From Surabaya we resumed our journey to the intersection of
light, Ḥabīb Jaʿfar b. Shaykhān in the town of Pasuruan.

-Abd al-Qādir al-Saqqāf, *The Travel of Habib ʿAlawī to Gresik*

In 1993, three years following the historic unification of North and South Yemen, a group of twenty-nine Bā ʿAlawī Indonesians embarked on a journey to their ancestral land. Led by the senior Bā ʿAlawī scholar of Solo, Habib Anis al-Habsyi (Ar. al-Ḥabashī) (d. 2006), the group visited different cities and *ḥawṭas* of Ḥaḍramawt to pay their respects to the dead and the living. During a meeting with the Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, Habib Anis expressed his concerns regarding the spiritual state of the Bā ʿAlawīs in Indonesia, who in his view, were drifting away from the path of their ancestors. He requested the scholars to nominate someone from among them to come to Indonesia in order to reacquaint their kinsfolk in the diaspora with the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. The scholars agreed to send a young scholar by the name of ʿUmar b. Muḥammad bin Ḥafīẓ (Habib ʿUmar) (b. 1962) to the land below the wind.

Within weeks, Habib ʿUmar landed in Jakarta. He was welcomed by Habib Anis and a few Bā ʿAlawī families close to the old scholar. Not many were excited by Habib ʿUmar's visit. After all, he was virtually unknown in Indonesia. Many smirked at the young scholar and characterized him as "w*alad ams*," or "*anak kemarin sore"* (Ar. and Ind. meaning "a child of yesterday" or "just a kid"). The situation began to turn when Habib ʿUmar was invited to deliver a sermon during the annual commemoration (*ḥawl*) of Habib Anis's grandfather, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1330/1912). Held every 20 Rabīʿ II (the fourth month of the Islamic calendar) in Solo, Central Java, the commemoration is always attended by a dozen of senior scholars, Bā ʿAlawī and others, and thousands of people (Alatas 2014). Habib ʿUmar's sermon captivated the audience. His rhetoric and eloquence enthralled them. His grasp of the different Islamic sciences surfaced through his eloquently crafted oration. Following the sermon, many of the senior scholars concluded that Habib ʿUmar was chosen by the scholars of Ḥaḍramawt because he was special. The term *walī* (saint) began to be used to characterize him. One Bā ʿAlawī scholar even said that, "if Habib ʿUmar is not a *walī*, then there are no *walīs*."

Habib ʿUmar traveled to Indonesia by himself. A month later, he returned to Ḥaḍramawt with his own *jamāʿa*, consisting of forty young Indonesians — the sons of senior Bā ʿAlawī and non-Bā ʿAlawī scholars — whose education was entrusted to him. In the first few years, he had to rent a small house to accommodate them. The forty Indonesians became the embryo of Habib ʿUmar's own religious academy, the Dār al-Muṣṭafā, formally established in 1997. Today, the academy enjoys international prestige, with nearly one thousand students from across the Islamic and Western world. Its graduates can be found in different parts of the world, assembling their own *jamāʿas* and aligning them to the *sunna* as articulated in Dār al-Muṣṭafā's Ḥaddādian

curriculum. Under Habib ʿUmar's skillful cultivation, the seedling has grown rapidly. Its many branches can now be found in different places, including Belleville, Michigan, twenty-five minutes drive from where this dissertation is written.

The story behind the establishment of Dār al-Muṣṭafā is known to many Bā ʿAlawīs in Java. The story certainly fits into the pattern of a Ḥaddādian *shaykh al-taʿlīm* from Ḥaḍramawt coming to Indonesia to alleviate the spiritual anxiety of the diasporic community.[81] What I want to focus on, however, is the relationship between a *speech event* — that of Habib ʿUmar's sermon in Solo — and the ensuing constitution of a *jamāʿa*.[82] The story of Habib ʿUmar's 1993 visit hints at how the sermon enabled the audience to recognize Habib ʿUmar as an *connector*, as someone who could connect them and their families to the *sunna*. What was it in Habib ʿUmar's sermon that allowed him to be recognized not only as an authoritative *shaykh al-taʿlīm* — whose authority emerges from the act of textual and aural transmission and instruction — but also a distinctive connector that deserves the appellation of saintliness? Are saints connectors by

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[81] While Ibn Yaḥyā — discussed in the last chapter — attempted to instruct the children of the Ḥaḍramī mercantile elites in their *langgars,* Habib ʿUmar chose to bring his *jamāʿa* back to Tarīm and built an institution to accommodate them. This decision was not without precedent. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, wealthy Ḥaḍramī families of Singapore and Batavia had sponsored the building of *ribāṭs* (Islamic boarding schools) (Ar pl. *arbiṭa*) in Ḥaḍramawt, where their children can be educated in accordance to the teachings of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* as codified in the Ḥaddādian curriculum. The properties that made up the endowments for these institutions were mostly found not in Ḥaḍramawt, but in the Ḥaḍramī diasporic centers like Singapore and Batavia. Ḥaḍramī boys of ten or eleven years of age were shipped to Seiyun and Tarīm where they live for the next seven to ten years in the claustrophobic cells of the *ribāṭs*. They returned to the Archipelago as "proper men," fluent in Arabic, learned in basic religious sciences, and ready to be wedded. This practice continued until the late 1960s when the communist government of South Yemen, or the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, decided to close down the *ribāṭs* and persecuted several leading Bā ʿAlawī scholars, including Habib ʿUmar's father — a teacher in the *ribāṭ* of Tarīm — who was kidnapped, tortured, and killed. Habib ʿUmar's visit thus marked the revitalization of an established educational itinerary between Southeast Asia and the Ḥaḍramawt. If in former times, the *ribāṭs* of Ḥaḍramawt were only frequented by Indonesian of Ḥaḍramī descent, today they have attracted indigenous Indonesians, including the children of senior scholars*,* who are groomed to become the future leaders of reputable *pesantrens.* For the history of the *ribāts* of Ḥaḍramawt, see: Freitag 1999: 165-183; Freitag 2003: 277-288.

[82] Following Michael Silverstein, I understand speech event as a communicative event endowed with a clear goal in a socially shared system. It consists of sequence of speech behavior (speaker and hearer), enabled by shared knowledge of a linguistic code, and takes place with the participants in given positions that can be altered over the span of the event. Other characteristics of a speech event that have to be taken into account include sociological aspects of the participants, prior speech events, and, gestures (Silverstein 1976: 13).

default? What course leads from a work of textual mediation and transmission to the ascription of saintliness?

To address these questions we need to leave for a moment the bigger picture of how different connectors constitute *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas* and zoom in on the notion of *connector* itself. I have shown how the authority of a *connector* is premised on his work in assembling a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* by connecting two different formations — or two moving parts — namely, the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Recall, however that in the anecdote of Sunan Kalijaga calibrating the *qibla* of the Demak mosque — discussed in the beginning of chapter 1 — there are three, and not just two moving entities: the Kaaba, the Demak mosque, and the Sunan himself. This suggests a way to think about (1) a *connector* as a formation, and (2) a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* as a viable alignment that involves the regimentation of three moving parts, just like a rotary combination lock that only opens when the notches of its three rotating and interlocking discs are in a specific alignment.

Our present task is therefore to examine the constitutive make up of a *connector*. In the last chapter we have seen how a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* is a *connector* precisely because he forms an assemblage consisting of actors, texts, and spaces of learning. We should now ask what is it that differentiates a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* and a *walī* (saint)? Are they interrelated and overlapping, or are they totally different? To accomplish this task, we need to turn from the inter-personal and inter-objective gatherings that constitute a *jamāʿa* to the heteroglossic composition of human actors recognized as authoritative connectors or saints. Speech events like Habib ʿUmar's sermon in Solo are moments when the socio-discursive entanglements that make a particular connector surface and become semiotically observable to both the spectators and the analysts. In this

chapter, I examine four cases, textual and ethnographic, to dissect the notions of saint and *connector* and lay bare their anatomical constitutions.

Sainthood, Stone Wall, Japanese Shōji Screen

More than a century ago, William James attempted to make sense of saintliness by probing into the inner conditions of individuals believed to be saints. James concluded that a saint is a

> man who lives in his religious centre of personal energy, and is actuated by spiritual enthusiasms, differs from his previous carnal self in perfectly definite ways. The new ardor which burns in his breast consumes in its glow the lower "noes" which formerly beset him, and keeps him immune against infection from the entire groveling portion of his nature. Magnanimities once impossible are now easy; paltry conventionalities and mean incentives once tyrannical hold no sway. The stone wall inside of him has fallen, the hardness of his heart has broken down ([1902] 2012: 198).

For James, saintliness is like a gravitational pull that takes hold of the individual and leaves no room for indeterminacy. Saints no longer feel the various inhibitions that formerly structured their characters. The confining selfhood has melted, leaving "immense elation and freedom" (*Ibid*: 202). James' definition of saintliness is of course one that presupposes a unified, psychologized, and coherent subject. After all, his discussion of saintliness is part of a broader project of developing a psychological approach to the study of religious experience. His concern was religious feelings and impulses rather than religious institutions or practices. Nevertheless, we can actually push his definition of saintliness in another direction, one that is less psychological and has more to do with the socio-discursive constitution of a subject.

One way to do so would be to take his metaphor of a stone wall more literally. A wall is a structure that defines an area. It obstructs mobilities and communications, while providing fortifications. A wall enacts borders and delineates an inside from an outside. Similarly, the ideological becoming of a modern subject has been characterized as involving the erection of a

wall or buffer that renders the self secure and impenetrable to outside elements. Agentive factors exterior to the self like spirits, moral forces, and "causal powers with a purposive bent," are interiorized and rendered as properties of the minds that can be explored and rectified in new ways (Taylor 2007: 539). From here we can at least identify the intellectual context in which James was writing. For James, the stone wall imprisons the self and does not allow enthusiasm and elation to be fully expressed. It is but a figuration of the self that inhibits and protects the self from internal state and desire, and does not protect the self from elements that are outside of the self. Saintliness is a one way street. In the absence of the psychological stone wall, a subject is able to fully and freely release his/her internal energies and experiences to the outside world. Once released they become perceivable to others and can then be comprehended in various ways. For James, religious experiences are neutral psychological experiences contingently identified as religious.

What if we take the idea of the buffered self not as axiomatic, but as a modern ideological formation that aims to produce "biographical illusion" (Bourdieu 1987)? What if the buffered self is nothing more than a desired product of purification (Latour 1993; Keane 2007), or any other similar projects that try to limit "the cancerous and dangerous proliferation of significations" (Foucault 1984: 118)? Then it is also possible to postulate a more porous and permeable notion of subjecthood and subjective experience, and to imagine a subject as an incessant formation entangled in, and *subjected to* the interlacing of different socio-discursive formations, while still recognizing a limited and always conditional degree of subjective agency. After all, despite its own permeability, a subject still has the capacity to *selectively* assimilate the words (and actions) of others (Bakhtin 1981), although the range of available selections is

always unevenly distributed. Being *subjected to* the interlacing of different socio-discursive formations also entails that subjects can be overwhelmed by their heteroglossic and heteromorphous surroundings, thereby the need for a barrier, whether an impenetrable stone wall or a porous and translucent Japanese shōji screen. Barriers do not only confine subjects from expressing their internal state; they also protect subjects from their tempestuous constituting environment.

The question then: is a saint a subject whose protective stone walls has completely fallen, or is he/she a subject who has substituted the stone walls with shōji screens to the extent that others can at times witness shimmering lights on their surfaces that come from one or more exterior and light radiating sources behind them? Perhaps a saint is more akin to a Javanese shadow puppet (*wayang*) whose animated tremulous shadow (*bayang*) is enthusiastically witnessed by an audience, but who, objectively speaking, is an assemblage made up of a puppeteer's voice and other sound-effect implements, hand acrobatics, chiseled water-buffalo leather, a supporting buffalo horn handle and control rods, a large, framed, and tightly stretched white cotton screen (*kelir*), and a heavy bronze coconut oil lamp (*blentjong*). This question underlines the importance of attending to the heterogeneous ways in which the relationship between voice, action, and agency are assumed and comprehended (Keane 1997a), and can only be answered by delving into the ways in which saints have been understood in a specific socio-discursive formation.[83] For my interlocutors, sainthood has been understood through the frame of Sufism.

[83] Rather than succumbing to the individualist assumptions that underly popular arguments about action, voice, and agency, Keane shows how in Anakalangese performance, ritual negotiations separate voice and agency, while attributing both to suprapersonal subjects (Keane 1997a: 139).

Prophetic Inheritors

Towards the end of his life, the great Andalusian Sufi-philosopher Muḥyiddīn Ibn ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) completed the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam,* one of his major opuses, containing a summary of his spiritual doctrine. In its prolegomena Ibn ʿArabī writes,

> I asked Allāh, in this task and in all my states, to place me among those of his servants over whom Satan has no power, and to favor me in all that my hands write, in all that my mouth speaks, in all that my heart contains, with a projection of His Glory, an inspiration breathed into my spirit and an assistance to protect me, *in order that I may be an interpreter and not an author*, *so that the men of God and the teachers of the heart who read this book will be certain that it proceeds from the station of inviolable Sainthood, which is beyond reach of the deceptive desires of the individual soul*… I have uttered nothing which has not been sent to me, I write nothing which has not been inspired. I am neither a prophet nor a messenger, *but simply an inheritor* (quoted in Chodkiewicz 1993: 50). [Emphasis added].

Denial of authorship was certainly a common authorial practice in late antiquity and medieval Europe as well as in the Islamic world.[84] However, what is precisely the relationship between sainthood and authorship? One piece of this puzzle is alluded to in the book's title: *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam,* the bezels of wisdom. A *faṣṣ* (Ar. pl. *fuṣūṣ*) is a bezel, the part of a ring that sets and encloses the precious stone. Like the setting of a ring, a saint is an "intersection of an aspect of divine wisdom with the human vessel which encloses it and thereby imposes its own limits on it" (*Ibid*: 48-9). Saints are the diminutive forms of the Prophets. They are regarded as screens through which the divine light shimmers on their surfaces, thereby allowing others to admire it (Kugle 2006: 29). As prophetic inheritors in the post-prophetic era, saints are the means through

[84] For example, in the introduction of the *Somniale Danielis* — a popular medieval dream book attributed to the prophet Daniel — the author writes:

> I am Daniel the prophet, one of the sons of Israel who were led captive from Jerusalem, the holy city. All the things [written here] were brought about by God; I have indeed said or affirmed nothing by myself, but have received these things from the lord (quoted in Kruger 1992: 10).

which the divine ambiguously participates in history.[85] For this reason Ibn ʿArabī aspires to become a recognizable animator — a mouthpiece through which the words of God can once again speak in the world of the humans.[86] As Prophetic inheritors, saints embody the *sunna* in its plenitude. Insofar as the *sunna* is understood by many Muslims to be divinely inspired in its entirety, the saints — who like the Prophets animate the divine — have, at least theoretically, the ability to rework the *sunna* in radical ways.[87] Recall how Sunan Kalijaga tilted not only the Demak mosque, but also the Kaaba (see: Chapter 1). This is precisely why throughout Islamic history, Sufis have been criticized by their detractors for elevating saints above prophets. In response, Sufi theoreticians have been preoccupied with defining and limiting the authority of saints in relation to the prophets (Radtke & O'Kane 1996; Knysh 1999b; Kugle 2006). This is why, Ibn ʿArabī had to emphasize that he was "neither a prophet nor a messenger, but simply an inheritor." While defining saints as Prophetic inheritors may appease the critics of Sufism, it

[85] The question of continuing revelation or infallible guidance after the death of the Prophet of course lies at the heart of the Shīʿī-Sunnī split in Islam. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the Sunnī have rejected the possibility for such a notion. William Graham has noted that "a systematic study of the roots and various forms of this notion and their relation to early Muslim ideas of inspiration of and revelation to Muḥammad" (1977: 38) is needed.

[86] In medieval Europe the modality of divine communication gradually shifted from the auditory to the visual. Already in *La Divina Commedia,* Dante elevated visual imagination as a receptacle of divine inspiration. For the poet, God could only communicate through visual imagination as human reason is dependent upon images for truth (Lynch 1988: 33). Beginning in the Eighteenth-century, Deists began to think of God as no longer a communicator, one who speaks to human, but as "a Great Architect, a manipulator of object in visual-tactile space," as well as other kinesthetically based concepts with spatial implications (Ong 1967:72).

[87] The Muslim scholars I talked to during my fieldwork always stress that the *sunna* — in its entirety — is divinely inspired. This is the doctrinal position of the Ashʿarite school which is the dominant Sunni theological school in both Indonesia and Ḥaḍramawt. In defending this position, my interlocutors often refer to two Qurʾānic verses that state that the Prophet "does not speak from his own desire, it is nothing less than a revelation that is sent to him" (Q. 53:3-4). Scholars have deployed these two verses to argue that the *ḥadīth* or textual reports of the *sunna* ought to be positioned as scriptures, just like the Qurʾān. Others, however, claim that the verses only refer to the Qurʾān, thereby excluding the Prophet's extra-Qurʾānic utterances or acts.

nevertheless cannot extinguish the radical potentialities latent in the notion of Sufi sainthood (or its conceptual cousin, the Shiʿī Imamate).[88]

The general Sufi notion of sainthood seems to be an attempt to address what Matthew Engelke describes as "the problem of presence" that is, how a religious subject defines and claims to construct a relationship with the divine through the investment of authority and meaning in certain words, actions, and objects" (2007: 9). Most religions, after all, are projects that seek to mediate interaction between human and intangible entities, be they God[s], angels, demons, spirits, or dead ancestors, whose perceptual absence or concealment can generate complex political and ethical dilemmas that call for communicative practices to render them present (Chakrabarty 2000; Mueggler 2001; Keane 1997b; Keane 2007; Johnson 2007; Engelke 2007; Lazier 2008; Luhrmann 2012). Are saints then *connectors* by default? Yes and no. They are by definition connectors in the general sense of actors who are recognized by others to bridge the divine and the humans by being translucent screens on whose surface, divine agency is displayed. But they are not necessarily *connectors* in the more technical sense of someone or something that aligns the Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* After all, their diminutive prophetic role allows them to supplant or rework the Prophetic *sunna* and constitute *jamāʿas* that revolve around their own *sunnas*, or what is usually described as the *sunnat al-walī* (the *sunna* of the saint). To illustrate this point, let us turn to the first case study.

[88] One can of course exemplify this with Bábism, whose leader, ʿAlī Muḥammad Shīrāzī (d. 1850) identified himself to be the gate (*bāb*) to the Hidden Twelfth Imam of Shīʿism but subsequently proclaimed the status of a new divine messenger. Subsequently, Mīrzā Ḥusayn ʿAlī Nūrī (d. 1892), otherwise known as BahāʾAllāh, claimed to be the Prophetic fulfillment of Bábism and established the Bahá'i Faith.

Case I: When roosters began to crow

The first case comes from the journey of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar bin Yaḥyā (Ibn Yaḥyā) discussed in the last chapter. Here, I want to look at a particular encounter that took place when Ibn Yaḥyā visited the Bā ʿAlawī scholar of Calicut, ʿAlawī b. Sahl Mawla al-Dawīla (d. 1260/1844). Known as the saintly leader of the Malabari Muslims — the *Mappilah* — ʿAlawī spent his life cultivating his *jamāʿa* while challenging both the authority of the Hindu aristocracy and the British colonial force. ʿAlawī's activism led to the outbreak of the *Mappilah* uprising which began in the 1830s and 1840s and continued sporadically until 1922 (Bang 2003: 80). The encounter between Ibn Yaḥyā and ʿAlawī is preserved in an anecdote narrated by the Bā ʿAlawī scholar Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās (d.1334/1916) and written down by one of his disciples.[89] It goes as follows:

> My master [al-ʿAṭṭās] , may God be pleased with him, related a story that when al-Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar bin Yaḥyā arrived in Malabar, he went to visit al-Ḥabīb ʿAlawī b. Sahl. Upon entering the house, he saw paintings of birds, roosters, and others. He thereupon objected, saying: "O my lord (*mawlānā*), your grandfather [the prophet], May peace be upon him, said that in the day of judgement a person who paints will be challenged to blow life onto them [the paintings] (*an yanfakh fīhā al-rūḥ*)." Al-Ḥabīb ʿAlawī then said, "do you have anything else apart from that?". He replied, "no". Thereupon al-Ḥabīb ʿAlawī puffed a short breath onto the paintings, and instantly, the rooster began to crow and the birds chirped. Thereafter, Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar declared his spiritual state to be sound (*fasallama al-Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar lahu ḥālahu*) (al-Ḥabasḥī 1979: 155).

What we have here is an encounter between a Ḥaddādian *shaykh al-taʿlīm* and an older Bā ʿAlawī saint who had assembled his own *jamāʿa* in Calicut. Note Ibn Yaḥyā's use of the honorific "my lord" (*mawlānā*) in addressing ʿAlawī, which betrays the former's deference to the

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[89] Aḥmad b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās was a prominent scholar and *manṣab* of Ḥurayḍa. He was known not only for his scholarship but also for his activism in settling disputes between armed tribes of Ḥaḍramawt. While he did not leave any written work, his correspondences and records of his oral teachings have been compiled by his students (Arai 2004).

latter's authority. Similar forms of reverence are shown by Ibn Yaḥyā's usage of indirect criticism and by his invocation of the Prophet in intimate kinship terms ("your grandfather") to articulate his disagreement with ʿAlawī. This allows Ibn Yaḥyā to criticize ʿAlawī while displacing the burden of responsibility to a distant principal (the Prophet) to whom the words are attributed.

Similar to the Qurʾānic story of Moses and al-Khiḍr (see: appendix A), this encounter begins with a recognition of authority troubled by elements that directly contradict the basis of that authority itself. As discussed in the last two chapters, the foundation of religious authority among the Bā ʿAlawīs is steadfastness in following the *sunna*. The presence of the paintings in ʿAlawī's house, however, undermines this. The *sunna* forbids mimetic depiction of living beings or those that have a spirit (*rūḥ*). Such a practice is deemed to be an imitation of God's creative activity, which is why Muslims tend to substitute mimetic visual depictions with ornamental calligraphy. For this reason Ibn Yaḥyā attempts to realign ʿAlawī back to the Prophetic *sunna*.

Responding to Ibn Yaḥyā's criticism, ʿAlawī stands up to the divine challenge, as articulated in the *ḥadīth,* by blowing life into the inanimate objects.[90] If Ibn Yaḥyā borrows the Prophet's authority to argue his case, ʿAlawī seizes that authority by becoming a connector between the divine and the material world which in turn allows him to either rework the *sunna,* or at the least, to excuse himself from the Prophetic injunction. The anecdote thus presents an instance in which a project of connecting and aligning an individual Muslim to the Prophetic

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[90] This incident can also be read through the conceptual lens of semiotic ideology. The anecdote shows how it turns out in the end that the paintings are not, or become not, paintings. One thus might speculate that Ibn Yaḥyā misconstrues the nature not just of ʿAlawī, but the paintings as well. Such an interpretation, however, does take the miraculous away by eliminating the act of transformation which is central to the story.

sunna fails precisely because the person already inhabits a connecting role considered higher by the striving connector.

This anecdote further illustrates the ambiguity that lies in the ways in which the relationship between action and agency is comprehended within the discursive frame of Sufi sainthood. If the ability to bring forth life is God's and God's alone, how is it that ʿAlawī is able to accomplish such an action? Who breathes life onto the paintings? Is it ʿAlawī, or is it God? If God remains the only being with such a creative ability, what is ʿAlawī's role in this? And why did Ibn Yaḥyā declare ʿAlawī's spiritual state to be sound? The ambiguity and indeterminacy that these questions generate points to an understanding that agency can actually be disjoined from action.[91] It alludes to an understanding of saints as screens that may allow divine agency to become intermittently visible to others. Being a screen where light — emanating from somewhere else — shimmers is not synonymous to being the light, just like the reflection of an apple on the surface of a mirror is not the same as the apple or the mirror. It nevertheless shares some of the properties of the apple and the mirror, and only becomes visible when the mirror and the object are in a particular spatial alignment.

Union and Intersection

Both Ibn Yaḥyā and ʿAlawī are *connectors*, albeit in different senses. Ibn Yaḥyā attempts to connect the individual Muslims to the Prophetic *sunna* by constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*. ʿAlawī — at least in this anecdote — is a connector between individual Muslims and the Divine,

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[91] In the Qurʾānic story of Moses and al-Khiḍr (see: appendix A), a similar ambiguity regarding action and agency is at work. When al-Khiḍr finally explained to Moses the rationale behind the three "reprehensible" actions, the former identifies the actor performing the action in three different ways:

1. *I desired* (*fa aradtu*) to damage it [the boat].
2. *We desired* (*fa aradnā*) that their Lord should give them [the parents of the slain child] another child.
3. *Your Lord desired* (*fa arāda rabbuka*) them [the two orphans] to reach maturity.

Al-Khiḍr then said, "I did not do [these things] on my own accord (*wa mā faʿaltuhu ʿan amrī*)"

similar to prophets. Analytically, we can distinguish these two different notions of *connector* by borrowing terminology from set theory, namely, that of *union* and *intersection*. *Union* and *intersection* are operations through which sets can be combined or related to one another. For example, if set A consists of the numbers 1, 2, and 3, and set B consists of 3, 4, and 5, then the *union* of set A and set B ($A \cup B$) consists of the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Note, however, that there is one number that is shared by set A (1, 2, 3) and set B (3, 4, 5), namely 3. In this case, the *union* of set A and set B also has an *intersection* ($A \cap B$), or a set that contains all shared elements of two different sets (figure 3.1 & 3.2). A *union* only involves *intersection* if and only if an intersection exists. Two sets can be combined even when they do not have anything in common, like set A (1, 2) and set B (3, 4) that results in the *union* of 1, 2, 3, 4.
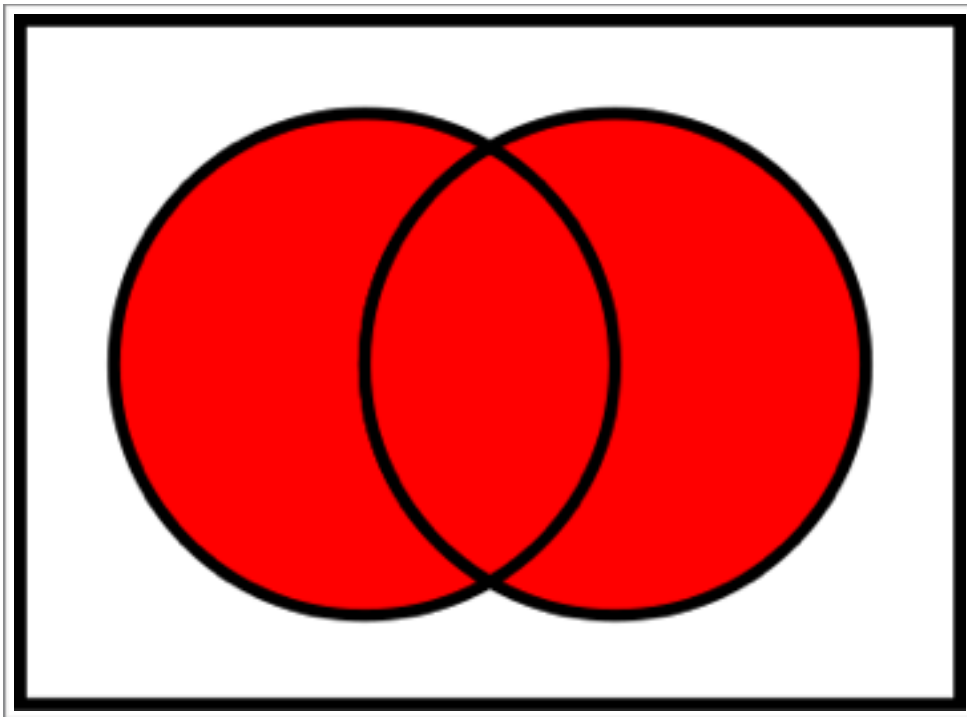
Figure 3.1: The *union* of two sets
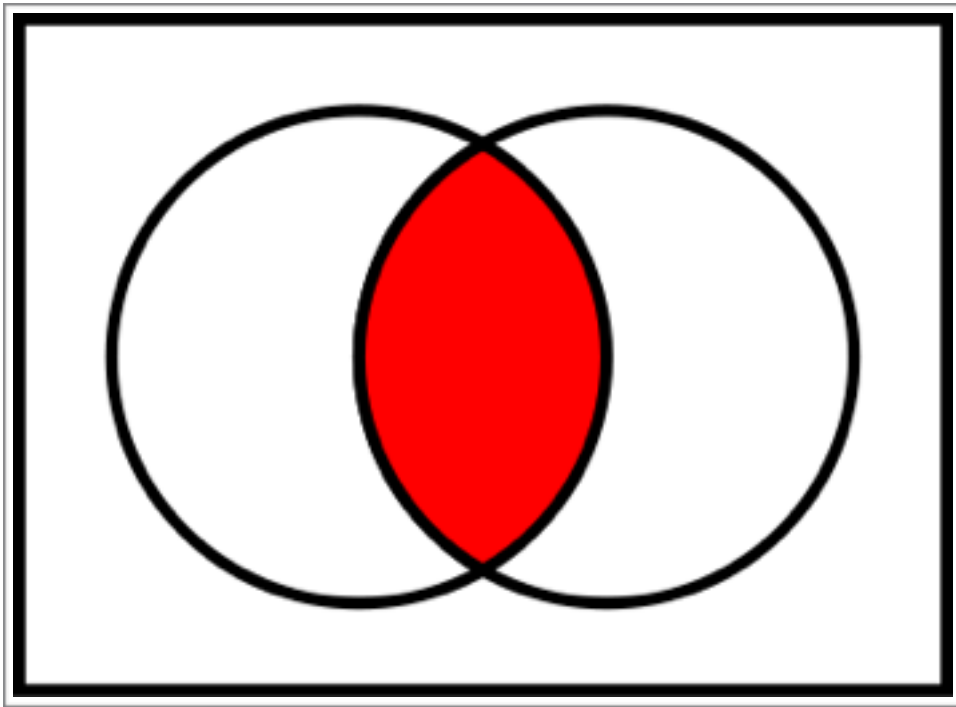
Figure 3.2: The *intersection* of two sets

The notions of *union* and *intersection* are useful when thinking about different kinds of *connectors*. *Connectors* are actors who are able to fuse the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* by performing certain works like transmitting the *sunna* as codified in the legal manuals, or teaching their congregations how to perform ablution in accordance to the *sunna*. Such works of establishing a *union* between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* do not presuppose the existence of elements shared by both formations. What is needed is a project of fusing the two. There are, however, actors who are able to partially connect the two formations without necessarily doing any conscious operation of aligning them. They connect the two formations simply because they belong to formation A, but exhibit certain elements that are recognizable to other members of formation A as being that of formation B. These actors are *intersections* that connect both formations even when they are not consciously establishing a *union* between them. I would suggest that one way to comprehend the Sufi notion of sainthood is precisely to see them as *intersections.* Saints are those who are recognized by their fellow Muslim (set A) to personify the divinely-inspired *sunna* (set B), just like the Prophet once did, even if they do not attempt to align the two, or instruct others to follow.

While in a particular paradigm of sainthood, like that established by al-Ḥaddād, a saint *ought* to be recognized by his/her instructional and proselytizing activism of establishing a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* (see chapter 2), this does not mean that those who have been recognized by the *jamāʿa* to be saints necessarily pursue such occupations. There are, for instance, ecstatic saints and unruly dervishes, whose controversial utterances (Ar. *shaṭḥ* pl. *shaṭaḥāt*) are seen as divulging divine secrets, thereby evoking the phenomena of divine revelation received by the Prophet Muḥammad (Ernst 1985; Ewing 1997; Friedmann 2003; Karamustafa 2006). In Java,

these ecstatic saints are popularly referred to as *jadab* (Ar. *majdhūb,* Pl. *majādhīb*), meaning one who is magnetized by divine attraction (*jadhb*). A *jadab* is usually contrasted to a *sālik*, someone who pursues a systematic discipline of spiritual wayfaring (*sulūk*) and until he/she is ready to be attracted by the divine. *Sulūk* is therefore a practice of preparing and conditioning oneself to *jadhb*. While every Sufi *ṭarīqa* teaches different sets of discipline to achieve this one shared goal, *jadhb* remains a divine prerogative. A *sālik* can become a *jadab* — although he/she will be more prepared than those without any preparation — and some *jadabs* can also pursue a systematic spiritual wayfaring to understand their spiritual experience *post-factum*.[92]

What seems clear from my conversations regarding *jadabs* with people in Pekalongan is that ecstatic utterances resemble Muḥammad's prophetic speech, albeit without the same capacity for discursive control. Nevertheless, the scholars I talked to shied away from identifying ecstatic speech as *sunna* precisely because it is not a reproducible model. Like possessed individuals, *jadabs* are not recognized as the authors of their own utterances. Rather, they are seen as animators of speech whose principal or author is believed to be God. This, however, can raise disconcerting feelings, especially when the utterance of a *jadab* contradicts or violates what people understand as the *sunna*.

How should one react to the utterance of a saint that violates the *sharīʾa*? This was a question raised by an undisclosed questioner to the *Lajnah Bahtsul Masail* (Ar. *lajnat bahth al-*

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[92] One of Ibn Yaḥyā's teachers, the Ḥaddādian Bā ʿAlawī scholar al-Ḥasan b. Ṣāliḥ al-Baḥr al-Jufrī (d. 1273/1856) clearly summarized the difference between a *sālik* and a *jadab*:

> A *majdhūb* is like someone who rapidly ascends to the highest floor of a building with ease. A *sālik* is someone who slowly ascends step by step with great difficulties. For that reason, he knows the details of each step and the rooms in each floor better than a *majdhūb*. Except if the *majdhūb* returns from the top slowly and observe carefully each step and floor he already bypassed until he reaches the ground floor. If he does that, then he is a *majdhūb* with perfect gnosis and at the same time a *sālik*. The starting point for the *majdhūb*'s journey is the final terminal of the *sālik* (al-Saqqāf 1987: 11).

masāʾil — Committee for Religious Research an Problem Solving) during the congress of the Indonesian Association of the Recognized Sufi *Ṭarīqas* — the Jam'iyyah Ahlut Thoriqoh al-Mu'tabaroh — held on November 9 1959 in Pekalongan.[93] The committee's ruling on the aforementioned question was that the teachings of a saint that contradict the *sharīʾa* "cannot be put into action (*tidak boleh diamalkan*) and cannot be used as legal guideline (*tidak boleh dijadikan pedoman hukum*)" (Masyhuri Ed.: 2006: 17). Another questioner asked the committee about praying behind someone who experiences *jadhb*:

> Q: What is your opinion about someone who prays behind an *imam* who experiences *jadhb*, and he knows that the things that the *imam* does legally annul the prayer? Is the person's prayer valid?
> A: The prayer of that person is not valid. And if he knows that the *imam* does things that, legally speaking, invalidate the prayer, then he is obliged to separate himself from the *imam*. This is because he is already convinced that the *imam*'s prayer has been annulled by the things he did (*Ibid*: 25-6).

During a subsequent congress, held in Semarang on 28 October 1968, another question regarding *jadab* was posed to the committee:

> Q: Can a *murshid* [an authorized spiritual guide in a *ṭarīqa*] nominate one of his pious disciples who experience *jadhb* as his successor (*khalifa*), particularly when the disciple's external acts (*amal-amal yang lahir*) violate Islamic law?
> A: He cannot nominate such a disciple because the utterance of a *jadab* cannot be taken as a guidance. This is explained in *Tabṣira al-fāṣilīn ʿan uṣūl al-wāsilīn*, page 72: "The utterances of those who experience *jadhb* and those whose consciousness slips away because they are immersed (*larut*) in their love for Allāh, cannot be taken as guidance (*tidak boleh dipedomani*). It is also explained in *Iqāẓ al-humam fī sharḥ al-ḥikam* that there are four different kinds of travellers to Allāh: (1) a mere *sālik* who physically follows the disciplines of a *ṭarīqa;* (2) a mere *majdhūb* or a *jadab*; (3) a *sālik* who experiences a *jadhb*; (4) *a majdhūb* who subsequently becomes a *sālik*. The first two cannot be a mentor because a mere *sālik* does not have the light of *jadhb* in him, and a

[93] The *Lajnah Bahtsul Masail* — consisting of senior Sufi *murshid* (authorized spiritual guide in a *ṭarīqa*) and scholars — is formed during every quinquennial congress of the Association to issue opinions and rulings on current matters and problems regarding Sufism and *ṭarīqa* that have arisen among the *jamāʿas* of every *ṭarīqa* belonging to the Association. Any attendee of the congress can write down their question and convey it to the committee who would then meet, discuss, and issue their ruling.

> mere *jadab* does not undertake the discipline of the *ṭarīqa*. The last two are those who deserve to be mentors and *murshids*, although the third is the most fitting (*Ibid*: 119).

The fact that questions surrounding *jadab* were asked of the *Lajnah Bahtsul Masail* in 1959 and 1968 indicates that Indonesian traditionalist Muslims were grappling with the difficulty of interacting with *jadabs.* Indeed similar questions remain relevant among my interlocutors today. Central to this is the problem of ambiguity and indeterminacy regarding the relationship between voice, action, and agency. However, those who do not subscribe to the Sufi notion of sainthood, or modernist Muslims who do not accept the notion of a porous self do not experience such a problem, as they do not provide the space for that ambiguity to begin with. *Jadab* becomes a problem for the so called *traditionalist Muslims* (see: chapter 2) precisely because they postulate a notion of ethical subject not only as *acting agents* (Mahmood 2005) but also as *acted-upon subjects* (Lambek 2003; Mittermaier 2011), and that the two are not mutually exclusive. A *jadab* is someone who is perhaps innately born, not with a stone wall, but with a translucent screen. It is also possible that he/she is someone whose stone walls have been transformed by the divine into translucent screens. A *sālik* is someone who works through various *sunna*-based physical and spiritual disciplines to imitate and become like the Prophet. Such disciplines are understood to raze his/her stone wall, allowing him/her to be acted upon, thereby becoming — like the Prophet — an *intersection*. A *sālik* who experiences *jadhb* can in turn become a *murshid* who guides others and reinforces the alignment between the Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* In contrast to the *sālik*, a pure *jadab* is acted upon and becomes an intersection without any preparation. Such an intersection can fracture an established alignment between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿā*. The second case illustrates this crucial point.

Case II: When *ifṭār* is served after ʿ*aṣr*

During my second Ramadan in the field, I was invited to a *buka puasa* or *iftar* by a Bā ʿAlawī scholar in Condet, Jakarta. I arrived at the house at four, around two hours before the time for breaking the fast, just after the time for the ʿ*aṣr* (afternoon) prayer. There were already seven other guests, sitting and chatting with the host at the reception room. Jakarta's traffic during Ramadan is heavier than usual, which is why many prefer to go early to an *ifṭār* event. Around half an hour later, a short and stocky gentleman in his sixties entered the room. He was wearing grey cargo pants, a striped polo shirt, and a green army beret, in contrast to other people in the room who were wearing sarongs, white shirt, and white prayer cap. Nevertheless, all of them, including our host, stood up to kiss the gentleman's hand. A conversation ensued. I thought that he was not speaking clearly. There was a disconnect in his conversation with the others. Yet they were all humbling themselves in his presence. My inability to understand what was going on was only assuaged when the person sitting next to me whispered the name "Wan Sehan" to my ear. Nervously, I realized that we were in the presence of a *jadab*.

I had heard about Wan Sehan — Habib Shaykhān al-Baḥr — from many people, although that was the first time I met him in person. "His words are known to come true." "His prayers are always answered." "People with different needs come to see him and get what they want." "Be careful, do not make him upset." "Always do what he says, for you do not want any calamity to befall you." These are among the descriptions of Wan Sehan I have heard from people during my fieldwork. I was also told that Wan Sehan likes to sing and dance in public gatherings. Recently, an Indonesian news channel reported an incident whereby "a depressed individual known to the locals as Wan Sehan" (*orang stress yang dikenal oleh penduduk sekitar sebagai Wan Sehan*) was

throwing rocks at the windows of a public school. Despite the blatant vandalism, the reporter continued, no one — not even the police — dared to take him away. The school's principal told the reporter that it was not the first time that Wan Sehan had done that.

Unexpectedly, Wan Sehan told our host to serve the food. The host was shocked and told Wan Sehan that it was not yet *maghrib* (twilight, when fasting is supposed to end). Wah Sehan raised his voice and told the host that it was already *ʿasr* and that we should all break our fast. Nobody dared to challenge the *jadab.* The host nervously went into the kitchen and told his helpers to bring the food out. Not long thereafter they came out with rice, mutton curry, grilled chicken, salad, and chili paste. Wan Sehan looked pleased. He smiled to the host and tapped him on his shoulder, saying "you are a generous man, may Allāh bless you and your family." He instructed the other guests to sit around the food. All of us hesitantly moved towards the food. Wan Sehan put some rice and curry on his plate and began eating. "Come eat.. eat this good food!" he said. We all put some food on our plates, although aside from Wan Sehan, no one had begun eating.

Suddenly a shout was heard from the direction of the main door. We all turned our heads and saw Aḥmad al-Ḥāmid — an elderly Bā ʿAlawī scholar known for his sternness and bad temper — standing by the door. He had just arrived and looked very grim. He shouted at Wan Sehan, saying, "Sehan, you can eat all you like but you cannot ask others to join you. It is okay for you but it is not okay for the others!". Wan Sehan looked at him, smiled, and without uttering a single word, continued his meal. The rest of us pushed away our plates. Many looked relieved by al-Ḥāmid's sudden intervention. "Away, away all of you from the food! fools! (*nyingkir, nyingkir loe pade dari tu makanan! geblek!*)," the elderly scholar told us, and we all moved and left Wan

Sehan to enjoy his food. Al-Ḥāmid then told us that while one should respect and maintain positive thoughts (*ḥusn al-ẓann*) towards *jadabs*, one should not follow them in matters that contradict the Qurʾān and the *sunna*. He turned to our host and lambasted him for acceding to Wan Sehan's request notwithstanding his scholarly credentials. "You can serve him food, but you should not provide food for the others," al-Ḥāmid concluded.

This case shows how someone taken as an *intersection* has the potential to fracture the alignment between the Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. As actors who are recognized to be connectors between the divine and the human, *jadabs* are capable of constituting their own *jamāʿas* that revolve around their own *sunnas*. Such *sunnas* can be deemed authoritative by others precisely because, like the prophets, the actor(s) instituting them are believed to be porous animator(s) of the divine. *Jadabs* have the radical potential to supersede the authority of the Prophet, and for that reason they have to be curbed. Al-Ḥāmid's intervention was a successful attempt to realign those who were in the process of revolving around Wan Sehan's authority back to the Prophetic *sunna*. Al-Ḥāmid's attempt was successful, precisely because Wan Sehan — unlike ʿAlawī of Calicut discussed in case I — did not resist the regimenting attempt.

To act or to be acted upon

Al-Ḥāmid, like Ibn Yaḥyā, represents the dominant Ḥaddādian paradigm of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Bā ʿAlawī scholars respect the spiritual state of the *jadabs* whilst warning their students against interacting with them. They view *jadabs* as perilous characters who can mislead those with or without strong foundations in the Islamic sciences away from the *sunna*. *Jadabs* cannot be taken as authorities precisely because unlike *sāliks* they are not guides (*murshids*) or

connectors who can help to establish a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*.[94] One ought to learn from an *acting agent* who has been *acted-upon* rather that an *acted-upon subject* who has never acted. Due to their own experience, acting agents are in the position to guide others. And when *jadhb* happens to them, and they are *acted upon*, they are in a better position to cope with it and guide others to it, without allowing such an experience to divert them from the Prophetic *sunna*.

At issue is the ability to control what is perceived to come from an Elsewhere (Mittermaier 2011). Here, the Prophet is taken as an important model. Posited as someone who received the major and final revelation, the Prophet is portrayed by his biographers as a well-composed figure who was able to animate divine revelation in an eloquent and comprehensible manner. Any claimant to an authoritative saintly role therefore needs to be recognized by others as resembling the Prophet. Here lies the centrality of the Prophetic *sunna* to the Sufi *ṭarīqa* as a guided and institutionalized spiritual method of wayfaring (*sulūk*). The *sunna* — as embodied by an authoritative Sufi guide — provides both the doctrinal and practical framework for the *sāliks* to ascend the spiritual ladder, purify, and prepare themselves to be acted upon by the divine. Preparing oneself to be acted upon by the divine is usually done by opening oneself to be acted upon by one's Sufi guide and allowing oneself to be subjected to rigorous exercises determined unilaterally by him. Such rigorous physical and spiritual training, which is usually done in tandem with discursive learning of the Qurʾān and the *sunna* as codified in theological, legal, and devotional texts, is designed to help *saliks* control their *jadhb,* if it ever occurs.

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[94] Habib Luthfi once gave me an apt similitude to describe this position. He said that to become wealthy, one should learn from the experience of a successful entrepreneur, and not from someone who became wealthy because he accidentally found a hidden treasure.

Emulating the Prophet is central to *sulūk*. The Prophet himself went though a set of spiritual disciplines, like seclusion or solitary vigil (*khalwa*). It was during such a retreat that he received the first revelation. At the same time, he was reported to be in the habit of imploring God to grant him light (*al-nūr*) and to make him into a light. In commenting upon this *ḥadīth*, Ibn ʿArabī explains that *al-nūr* is also one of the names of the Qurʾān. Indeed the Prophet's wife ʿĀʾisha once described the Prophet by saying that "his nature was the Qurʾān" (*kāna khuluquhu al-qurʾān*) (Chodkiewicz 1993: 95-96). For Ibn ʿArabī, perfect sainthood — like Prophecy — is therefore a state in which the human becomes organically linked to the Qurʾān, that the two become inseparable. Note that for Sunni Muslims the Qurʾān is posited not only as a text, but also as the eternal speech of God (*kalām Allāh al-qadīm*).[95] When acting agents strive to become a "walking Qurʾān" (Ware 2013), they can also be understood as preparing themselves to be subjects that are acted upon by the Qurʾān or divine speech. Posited as eternal divine speech, the Qurʾān can never be fully mastered or appropriated by an appropriating agent. It can, however, appropriate acting agents, turning them into animators of divine speech. Animated by these embraced agents, the Qurʾān can once again become situated living speech (*kalām*) and not a mere text. Michael Gilsenan has shown how in Lebanon Islamic authority is projected and recognized, among others, through the ability to integrate sacred speech into everyday speech. Muslim scholars, Gilsenan argues, see themselves as the guardians of the revelation, "more

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[95] According to the theologians of the Ashʿarī and Māturīdī schools, *kalām* or speech refers to both an eternal, uncreated attribute of God as well as to originated speeches and verbal utterances. Saʿd al-Dīn ʿUmar Taftazānī (d. 793/1390) explained that this two aspects of *kalām* is congruent with the two different yet interconnected definitions of speech as (1) a single attribute, and (2) a variety forms of verbal utterances for commanding, prohibiting, and narrating (1950: 60). Both are considered *kalām*, and yet while the former is eternal and free from any contextual variety, the latter is created and tied up to semantic and pragmatic contexts. The former refers to the verbal expression subsisting in the divine mind (*kalām nafsī*) and not arranged in parts. The latter denotes speech composed of letters and arrangements (uttered or imagined), and therefore subject to temporal sequence (*Ibid:* 66). This theological perspective allows a conceptualization of the divine speech as ontologically eternal with material and historical instantiations.

specifically, they guarded the Word as *text*" (1983: 36). What I want to suggest, however, is that that whereas the *ʿulamāʾ* (scholars) guarded the Word as *text*, saints are ambiguously guarding, and simultaneously are guarded by the Word as *voice*. We therefore return to the centrality of language — in particular its formal properties — as a crucial semiotic form through which divine light becomes perceivable to others. Formal properties are not mere formalism. Rather, they are important mechanisms of mediation. They are crucial to the work of establishing connections between the divine and the human, and to the emergence of *intersections*.

To be embraced by the Qurʾān, however, is premised on an adequate familiarity with the Qurʾān. One has to act before being acted upon. Memorizing the Qurʾān, for instance, allows its summoning as part of an ongoing discursive interaction. Similar to the emphasis on mnemonic practice in medieval Christian monastic tradition, memorization is central to traditional Islamic education, precisely because it allows memorizers to weave something new from the fragments of memorized materials (Carruthers [1990] 2008; Berkey 1992; Messick 1993; Chamberlain 1994; Moosa 2005). Memorization is a creative process and not simply a rote-learning. It is a technique that prepares students to have control over the accumulated knowledge.[96] In these traditions, the notion of a writer or an orator refers more to a textual or discursive worker than an

[96] Dale Eickelman for instance observes how memorization of the Qurʾān enables the Qurʾān to be voiced out of its "original" context. In Morrocco, one is recognized as endowed with Islamic knowledge and refined rhetorical skills if one can spontaneously voice a Qurʾānic verse appropriate to a new context, which gives the impression as if that verse is revealed for that particular event (Eickelman 1985: 64).

author.[97] Insofar as what is memorized, animated, and woven into one's own speech is posited by the spectators as the eternal speech of God, however, it opens up to agentive and enunciative ambiguity. Who is animating whom? Is it possible for humans to appropriate God's speech or is it God's speech that appropriates humans? Here we return to our initial question regarding the possibility of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* — whose authority emerges from textual mastery and transmission — to become identifiable as a saint. To illustrate this further, let us return to Habib ʿUmar bin Ḥafīdh with whom I began this chapter.

Case III: When a Scholar is Embraced by the Divine

Ever since his successful first journey to Indonesia, Habib ʿUmar has been invited to visit at least once a year. To date he has visited numerous localities around the country. Scholars, government functionaries, and business elites vie with one another to invite and host Habib ʿUmar. Whenever he is scheduled to speak, thousands flock to listen. He is no longer the object of condescension he once was, but a cherished saint whose portraits have been continuously reproduced, sold, framed, and hung in peoples' homes. His speeches have been translated into Indonesian and compiled into best-selling books. His academy, Dār al-Muṣṭafā, annually recruits increasing numbers of students from Indonesia and has a representative office in Jakarta that deals with

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[97] Similarly in regards to Javanese textual workers, Nancy Florida writes:

> At the outset, it is important to note that the words used in Java to designate "writer" do not share with English (and French) the cognate "authority" of the "author." The Javanese words for "writer" connote a much less inflated status for "the textual worker" (*ingkang akarya sastra*) than does the Anglo-French "author." The Javanese "writer" (*panulis, panyerat*) may be the person who physically writes or inscribes (*anulis, anyerat*) any text, the "scribe" by whose hand the written artifact is produced. Then again the writer may be work's "composer" (*panganggir, pangiket*): s/he who "interlaces" (*nganggit*) and "binds together" (*ngiket*) words or texts in textually productive manners. Significantly, in the discursive terms of Javanese writing, there is often no clear distinction between these two categories of writing: that is, writing as physical "replication" of prior inscription, and writing as "original" composition. On the one hand, the "scribe" enjoyed a modicum of poetic freedom in his or her "copying" (*nurun*, *nedhak*) of texts which often engendered new variants and versions of old texts. On the other, the "composer," working within conventions of Javanese textuality, would sometimes borrow (that is, copy) from older works, interlacing (*nganggit*) and rebinding (*ngiket*) old textual fragments into new contexts to create his or her "original" work (1993: 24-5).

recruitment, admission, and strengthening connections with local *madrasas* and *pesantrens*. The office also arranges Habib ʿUmar's annual visit and mentors recent graduates of Dār al-Muṣṭafa.

During my fieldwork I attended Habib ʿUmar's sermon held at a large mosque in South Jakarta. I had known him in Tarīm. He also had visited and spoken at the University of Michigan a few months before I departed for the field. This, however, did not mean that I was able to meet him. It was almost impossible to meet Habib ʿUmar in Indonesia. There were simply too many interested people, all of whom were vying to meet him or at least to get close to him and kiss his hand. There were close to five thousand people inside and outside the mosque. While I had seen Habib ʿUmar speak at academic forums and conferences, or when he teaches his students at Dār al-Muṣṭafa, I had never actually seen him delivering a sermon in a large oratorical event.

Whilst waiting for Habib ʿUmar to come, I conversed with three people who were sitting next to me. They were excited to see and listen to Habib ʿUmar. One of them told me how lucky we were to be in a gathering where a living saint was present. Another told me how he had never missed seeing Habib ʿUmar during his annual visit. Around forty minutes later, Habib Umar's entourage arrived and was welcomed with drums and songs in praise of the Prophet and his family. Habib ʿUmar entered the mosque heavily guarded by his disciples and security guards. People were told to sit and ease his entry. Some were shouting "blessing upon the Prophet!" (*ṣallū ʿala al-nabī*) in Arabic, to which the congregants responded "Allāh's peace and blessing upon him and his family" (*Allahumma ṣallī wa sallim ʿalayhi wa ʿalā ālihi*).

Habib ʿUmar sat next to the *miḥrāb*, the niche where a prayer leader stands during the prayer. Reciters then began to read a *mawlid* text composed by Habib ʿUmar, entitled *The Shimmering Light in Mentioning the Birth of the Interceding Prophet* (*al-Ḍiyāʾ al-lāmiʿ bi dhikr*

mawlid al-nabī al-shāfiʿ).[98] The title of the *mawlid* resonates with our discussion of Sufi saints as translucent screens on whose surface divine light shimmers and becomes perceivable to others. Is Habib ʿUmar or his literary composition a screen where the light shimmers? Is he the author of those poetic verses or is he situating himself as an animator? Whatever it is, Habib ʿUmar looked very pensive during the recitation. Muslims of Sufi orientation believe that reciting the *mawlid* is a serious ritual of presencing the Prophet's spirit. At one point when the recited text described the the Prophet's birth, everyone stood up (*qiyām*), singing "O Prophet peace be upon you" (*yā nabī salām ʿalayka*). The *qiyām* is believed to be the moment when the Prophet's spirit is present.[99]

Following the *mawlid*, Habib ʿUmar stood up to deliver his sermon. The atmosphere of the mosque already felt intense after an hour-long recitation, singing, and drumming. Habib ʿUmar retained his pensive mood. He spoke slowly at first, praising God and the Prophet while telling the congregants how lucky they were to be in such a *jamāʿa*. He then related several stories about the Prophet, describing his character and mannerisms. He shed tears as he recollected the Prophet's virtues. As he went on, his speech became faster. His voice turned higher as he began to warn (*al-taḥdhīr*) and instill fear (*al-tarhīb*) on his listeners. He closed his eyes as he described the excruciating punishments of the hereafter, as if he was trying to

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[98] The *mawlid* is a panegyric biography of the Prophet that begins with the story of the spiritual conception of the Muhammedan Light, and moves on to the Prophet's birth, his upbringing, first revelation, and nocturnal journey (*miʿrāj*) (Katz 2007; Kaptein 1993a). In Ḥaḍramawt and Indonesia, recitations of *mawlid* are used to celebrate various occasions including the Prophet's birthday, weddings, housewarming, and circumcision. There are several *mawlid* texts recited in Indonesia, the most popular being the *ʿIqd al-jawhar fī mawlid al-nabī al-azhar* (The Jeweled Necklace of the Resplendent Prophet's Birth) of the Madinan Jaʿfar b. Ḥasan a-Barzanjī (d. 1177/1764), and thus its recitation in Java is usually described as *berjanji* or *berzanjen*. Another popular *mawlid* text is that of the Yemeni ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Dībaʿī (d. 944/1537). In Java, the recitation of the *mawlid* of al-Dībaʿī is referred to as *diba'an*. Recently, the *mawlid* composed by the Bā ʿAlawī scholar ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1330/1912) titled *Ṣimt al-durar fī akhbār mawlid khayr al-bashar* (The Pearl Necklace of the Best Human's Birth) is becoming increasingly popular. Habib ʿUmar's *mawlid* is a recent addition to this list.

[99] This particular practice has been a subject of long debate between the anti-ritualistic modernist Muslims and their traditionalist defenders. Nico Kaptein (1993b) argues that the rejection of *qiyām* could be seen as one of the major characteristics of the young modern reformist in the Indonesian Archipelago (known as the *Kaum Muda*).

visualize the inferno. Moments later he began to sob. His tears dripped onto his beard. Seeing him in such a vulnerable state, many of the congregants began to cry with him, even those who were not literate in Arabic. Habib ʿUmar talked on and on without a single stop. His consistently rhymed and metered speech gushed forth like an uncontrollable rapids. His body quivered and his hands gesticulated erratically. His face was drenched in sweat. While in the beginning of the sermon, he used direct quotation when reciting a Qurʾānic verse, towards the end, he began weaving Qurʾānic verses into his own speech:

> And we see those who live with us on the face of the earth with their diverse ideas. And those who came before you and those who will come after you. All are under [religious] obligation (*mukallifīn*). *And you will be sorted into three classes* [Q. 56:7] (*thalātha*). There is no four to it (*lā rābiʿ lahā*)! *Those on the right, what people are they* (*al-maymanah*)*? Those on the left, what people are they* (*al-mashʾamah*)*? And those in front, ahead indeed* (*al-sabiqūn*)*! They are those brought nearest* (*al-muqarrabūn*) [Q. 56: 8-11]. *If he is one who is brought near* (*al-muqarrabīn*), *he will have rest, ease and a garden of bliss* (*naʿīm*). *If he is one of those on the right* (*yamīn*), *he will be greeted with peace by his companions on the right* (*yamīn*). *But if he is one of those who denied the truth and went astray* (*al-mukadhibīn al-ḍāllīn*), *he will be welcomed with scalding water (ḥamīm), and he will burn in hell* (*jaḥīm*) [Q. 56: 88-94]. He will be roasted in hell (*bi-l-jaḥīm*). In the fire! Before he had stocks in the bank and after (*baʿdayn*)? Before he had stocks in the bank and after (*baʿdayn*)? Before he was a minister and after (*baʿdayn*)? Before he was a leader and after (*baʿdayn*)? Before he was a leader of a great country and after (*baʿdayn*)? *He will be welcomed with scalding water (ḥamīm). And he will burn in hell* (*jaḥīm*)! [Q. 56: 88-94].

Habib ʿUmar interlaced Qurʾānic verses and his own utterances without breaking their rhymes. In the immediacy of the moment, it became quite difficult to distinguish between his and divine voice. Many of the congregants sobbed with him. Some cried "O Allāh" out loud. The atmosphere was very dense.

Habib ʿUmar continued speaking in a frenzied manner, still retaining the meters and rhymes. At one point he unexpectedly twisted a Qurʾānic verse by breaking the verse and completing it with his own voice:

> Your names are written on the gate of fire (*bāb al-nār*). Your names are written on the gate of fire (*bāb al-nār*). We seek protection from the wrath of The Compeller (*al-jabbār*). Seek protection from *Allāh's fire, made to blaze! (nār Allāh al-mūqadah*). *Which rises over people's hearts (al-afʾidah*). *It closes in on them* (*mūṣadah*). *In towering columns* (*ʿamad mumaddadah*) [Q. 104: 6-9]. Beware, beware! So *woe to those who pray! whose in their prayers are* [Q. 107: 4-5] ...

Suddenly he stopped without completing the verse. The congregations instantly completed the verse by saying *sāhūn* (heedless) [Q. 107: 5]. Habib ʿUmar however did not follow them in completing the verse with the word "heedless," but substituted it with his own speech: "delaying them from their prescribed time" (*yuʾakhirunaha ʿan waqtihā*). Habib ʿUmar therefore spontaneously animated divine speech while replacing its part with his own voice, generating enunciative ambiguity that was reinforced by visible muscular motion and vocal alterations.

Habib ʿUmar can certainly be described as a gifted orator, someone who effectively moves his followers' emotions by gradually and cautiously taking them to an oratorical climax marked by erratic bodily movements, high pitch vocal quality, and the entwining of divine and human voices. His performance instills awe, fear, humility, and regret. While I have heard numerous times from different people that Habib ʿUmar is just a gifted orator who plays with people's emotion, and nothing more, people I talked to following his sermon in South Jakarta described him and the oratorical climax in more complicated ways. One of them told me that Habib ʿUmar experienced — using an English word — "a trance". Another used the Arabic colloquial term "*jaʾ ḥāluh,*" which literally means "his spiritual state descends." Another person

described what happened to Habib ʿUmar as *istighrāq*, a technical Sufi term meaning immersion or absorption into God, to the extent that one becomes oblivious of the world. Another described him using the Indonesian term "*seperti kesurupan*" (as if he was possessed), although in *kesurupan*, the agents are usually satan or jinns.[100]

These various descriptions indicate how speech events are sites through which saintliness — which for those of Sufi orientation is marked by a dislocation of action from agency, or to be *acted upon* by the divine — becomes semiotically perceivable. Speech events like sermons allow *shaykh al-taʿlīms* to perform, embrace, and be embraced by their role as animators of divine speech. This involves overcoming skittish behavior and distance between them and their virtual self as implied in the role (Goffman 1961: 95, 117). It also involves actively liberating themselves from other roles that might hold on to them and disallow complete embracement. This is basically what the three-step Sufi spiritual discipline of *takhallī-taḥallī-tajallī* is designed to accomplish.[101] Habib ʿUmar's competence as a discursive worker opens up the possibility for him to be perceived by others as being acted upon, different from his normal speaking role, and recognizable to some as a mark of saintliness. At such specific moments, he becomes recognizable as an *intersection,* which in turn enables him to vigorously align individual

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[100] Several weeks later, I asked Habib Luthfi about Habib ʿUmar's oratorical performance. He told me that Habib ʿUmar is someone who has reached *kashf al-ghiṭa*, or lifting of the veil, which entails the person being precipitated (*dihujani*) with divine knowledge to the extent that his lips continue to animate divine words without having any control. Such people, Habib Luthfi continued, are like a dam that bursts, allowing a large body of rejuvenating water to flow uncontrollably and benefit barren hearts.

[101] Sufi scholars usually discuss spiritual method of wayfaring (*sulūk*) in terms of the three phases of spiritual growth: *takhallī-taḥallī-tajallī*. *Takhallī* is a commitment to the spiritual path by stripping the self from debased attributes and characters. *Takhallī* is followed by *taḥallī,* dressing up of the self with fine and virtuous attributes of the divine as articulated in His Beautiful Names (*asmāʾ al-ḥusna*) and Sublime Attributes (*ṣifāt al-ʿulya*) all of which are personified in, and embodied by the Prophet Muḥammad and instantiated in his *sunna*. The result of *takhallī* and *taḥallī* is *tajallī* in which the person's attachment to divine names and attributes leads to the names' embracement of his/her self, and the person becomes a screen through which others can glimpse divine Names and Attributes.

Muslims to God and the Prophetic *sunna*, thereby facilitating *union.* In the process they are constituted as a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*. What is needed then is subsequent work of turning that effervescent *jamāʿa* into a more durable social assemblage. Educational institutions, like Habib ʿUmar's *Dār al-Muṣṭafā* perform precisely that role. However, the fact that some opt to see him simply as a gifted orator shows that any performance of saintliness remains contested.

Embracement

In chapter two, I have discussed how in al-Ḥaddād's view, a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* ought to employ and imitate rhetorical devices used in the Qurʾān including incitement of desire (*al-targhīb*), intimidation (*al-tarhīb*), announcement of glad tidings (*al-tabshīr*), and warnings (*al-taḥdhīr*) to instill emotional states and induce desires on others for personal reform. *Daʿwa*, for al-Ḥaddād, is a form of communication that invokes Qurʾānic message and mirrors its rhetorical forms. Habib ʿUmar's sermon clearly exemplified this communicative paradigm. A connector who strives to align the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* ought to behave and speak like the Prophet did. This involves the ability to control and weave divine voice into one's own speech which in turn can generate enunciative ambiguity that can lead him/her to be seen by others as being embraced by the divine voice.[102] This implies that any *shaykh al-taʿlīm* — whose authority rested on a mastery of the scripture, as well as theological, legal, and devotional texts — can potentially be recognized as a saint, more so when he/she has the Prophetic genealogy.

[102] One can compare this with what Dell Hymes (1981) designated as "breakthrough", that is, a shift in the speaker's relationship to his/her words. A speaker may, for instance, report the words of others, a practice that maintains distance between the self and his/her words. In an actual speech event, a speaker can shift to a performance, that is, fully identifying oneself with the animated words, or even identifying oneself with the actual author of the words. In religious contexts, such a breakthrough may restructure relations between the actual speech event and other ontological planes. As a cultural behavior, performance allows a person to assume responsibility to an audience in a specific way

However in any situated activity, an individual's relationship to his/her ascribed role differs according to his/her capacity, attachment, and active engagement with that role. Erving Goffman has identified three levels of individual engagement with his/her role: commitment, attachment, and embracement (Goffman 1961). Certainly anyone who is recognized as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* is someone who is committed to this role. Some perhaps are more attached to it than others. But only a few are recognized by others to be embraced by such a role. Embracement is a stage in which there is no distance separating the individual and his/her role. As Goffman describes it, "to embrace a role is to be embraced by it" (1961: 94). Embracement not only requires a demonstration of qualification and capacities for performing a role, but also attachment, active engagement, "spontaneous involvement in the role activity," and ""visible investment of attention and muscular effort" (*Ibid*). Embracement is a state in which doing becomes synonymous with being. As such, it also involves liberating oneself from other roles that might hold on to them and disallow complete embracement. Let us now turn to the final example, the Bā ʿAlawī *shaykh al-taʿlīm* Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭālib al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1347/1929) who today is regarded as the patron saint of Pekalongan.

Case IV: The Saintly *Shaykh al-taʿlīm* of Pekalongan

During a meeting with several Bā ʿAlawī scholars during his brief return trip to Ḥaḍramawt in 1894, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās was reported to say:

> There are no collection of *ḥadīth* (*musnad*) or chain of [*ḥadīth*] narration (*isnād*), except that I am connected to it (*illā wa lī bihi kamāl al-ittiṣāl*); and there is no book in all branches of knowledge, except that I have received a license (*ijāza*) for it [to read or teach it], with established chains (*al-asānīd al-thābita*), whether in sciences, teaching, litanies, and invocations… (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 89).

This is a claim to a form of Islamic authority that I have described as *shaykh al-taʿlīm,* an authority built on textual mastery, transmission, and instruction. Al-ʿAṭṭās claims to be a *connector* between the Prophetic *sunna* — as articulated in the *ḥadīth* and other texts — and his contemporaries. As discussed in chapter 2, among the Bā ʿAlawīs such a connecting role was central to al-Ḥaddād's vision and paradigm. Indeed al-ʿAṭṭās — like Ibn Yaḥyā before him — was a product of the Ḥaddādian paradigm. Born in the village of al-Hajarayn, Ḥaḍramawt in 1255/1839, al-ʿAṭṭās was educated under the guidance of leading Ḥaddādian scholars. Among his teachers were the students of Ibn Yaḥyā.

After finishing his studies with the scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, al-ʿAṭṭās traveled to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage and continue his education. Among his teachers in Mecca was the eminent Shafiʿī *muftī* of Mecca, Aḥmad b. Zaynī Dahlān (d. 1303/1886), who was also the teacher of many Southeast Asian scholars (Laffan 2011: 133-6). Dahlān himself studied with, and was closely connected to the Bā ʿAlawīs (Bang 2014: 27-8). Influenced by the Haddādian paradigm, Dahlān stressed the importance of *daʿwa* and instructed his senior students, including al-ʿAṭṭās, to go and live in the countryside among the bedouins and teach them religious knowledge (al-ʿAṭtās 1979: II, 311). He prepared his students not only to become scholars with grounded scholastic knowledge, but more importantly, to become *connectors* who can articulate the *sunna* and constitute a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa.*

After living in Mecca for twelve years, al-ʿAṭṭās traveled to Java for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives. But as we have learnt in the previous chapter, there was high demand for a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* who could provide religious instruction for the Ḥaḍramī diaspora. Like Ibn Yaḥyā before him, al-ʿAṭṭās fulfilled a much needed role in the diaspora, which was

perhaps why he decided to make Pekalongan his new home. All of al-ʿAṭṭās' hagiographers stress that he did not engage in any form of mercantile activity. Rather, he chose to become a Qurʾānic instructor, teaching people different recitations in accordance with the *sunna* (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II, 312). I will examine in more detail al-ʿAṭṭās' *jamāʿa* in Pekalongan in the next chapter. For now I am mainly interested in exploring the ways in which he became recognizable not only as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* but also as a saint.

The hagiographical materials portray al-ʿAṭṭās as an uncompromising *shaykh al-taʿlīm*.[103] He is perceived and presented as a saint due to two major characteristics, namely, his unrelenting commitment to upholding the *sunna* and his ascetic lifestyle. Let us see how he is portrayed in several hagiographical sources:

> And so when Allāh Most High decided to bring goodness to the land of Java and its inhabitants, He moved his [al-ʿAṭṭās] determination to travel there until he reached Pekalongan. He chose that place to be his home and filled his days there. And thus he became the Kaʿba for those with intent (*kaʿba li-l-quṣṣād*) and fresh spring for those who drink (*mūrudān ʿadhban li-l-wurrād*). There, he raised the banner of knowledge and teaching, gave his attention to benefitting those who seek, helped those who want to learn, and alleviated them from the disease of ignorance that had raised its banners in this land. He hunted ignorance through a great courageous hunt and gave guidance until he was able to shove ignorance into the abyss. He encouraged good and forbade evil. In his *daʿwa* we was unrelenting. He did not fear the censures of others. He was not patient

[103] I limit myself to four principal hagiographies of al-ʿAṭṭās:

1. Al-ʿAṭṭās 1949. This is the earliest hagiography written by al-ʿAṭṭās' disciple, Muḥsin b. Muḥammad al-ʿAṭṭās. This short work is the one that is recited annually during the *ḥawl*. This work has never been published. The copy in my possession is from a 1369/1949 manuscript kept in the Markaz al-Noor archive in Tarīm, Ḥaḍramawt.
2. Al-Ḥaddād 2009. This account is written by ʿAbdillāh b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād (d. 1367/1947). It is a part of a three-volume hagiography of al-ʿAṭṭās' contemporary, Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād, entitled *Qurrat al-nāẓir bi manāqib al-ḥabīb Muḥammad bin Ṭāhir.* This work has recently been published.
3. Al-ʿAṭṭās 1979. This account is written by another disciple of al-ʿAṭṭās, ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1395/1976). It is part of a two-volume hagiographical dictionary of Bā ʿAlawī saints and scholars who lived from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, entitled *Tāj al-aʿrās*. This work was published posthumously in Kudus, Central Java in 1979.
4. Al-ʿAṭṭās 2006. This is the most recent and most extensive hagiography of al-ʿAṭṭās, written by his grandson, Aḥmad b. ʿUmar. Entitled *Mawārid al-ṭālib bi manāqib al-ḥabīb Aḥmad bin Ṭālib*, this work includes a collection of al-ʿAṭṭās' letters and correspondences. This work has been privately printed and circulated, but it is not published.

when it came to redressing evils, which he saw as something that had to be rectified with full determination… For years he lived in this land in hardship, eating modest food and did not engage in pleasures, except for those relating to basic necessities of life. (al-ʿAṭṭās 1949: 8-9, 11-12)

He sat and taught at the mosque in the Arab quarter every morning and afternoon. He performed his five daily prayers there. His time was filled with virtuous deeds and worship both at the mosque and at his home. He did not want to part with the *sunna* of the Prophet. He never performed acts that do not conform to the religious ethics, and others did not dare to do so in his presence. Those who did not conform to religious ethics, like shaving their beards, growing their mustache, or wearing golden rings, would not dare to meet him. He could not resist himself when he witnessed wrongdoings, and his hand moved faster than his lips. When he witnessed wrongdoings he screamed with a shriek that sent shivers to the hearts and limbs… He used to throw pebbles at every woman who did not cover her head, even if she was the wife of a European or the wife of the ruler. He was famous for that. So those women would not use the streets that he frequented. When they do so, they would cover their heads. It is indeed the custom of the women in the Java to walk about bareheaded. But their fear of him made the women to cover their heads whenever they saw a man wearing white robe and turban for fear that it could be him (al-Ḥaddād 2009: I, 725-6).

Everyone who had the intention to see him would first learn [the proper way] from those who already knew him, as if they were preparing to go to *ḥajj*. Those who were in the habit of shaving their beards grew them a few weeks before [meeting him]. Those with long mustaches trimmed them. Those who had quiffs changed their hairstyles. Those who wore non-white prayer caps, or who liked to go out bareheaded, brought white prayer caps. As for those who liked to wear Western clothes, like pants and coats, and smoke tobacco, who vowed not to attend his gatherings,would never break their vows [meaning they would never go near him]. He did not tolerate anyone who errs when reciting the Qurʾān, or when performing the prayer, or when taking ablution, even if that person was learned. He would loudly shout at them, and sometimes would use his walking stick to strike the person (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II 314).

One day a person who could not grow facial hair came to see him. When he kissed Habib Aḥmad's hand, he struck him as was his habit. That person then told him, "God does not give me beard Habib…". Upon hearing that, Habib Aḥmad asked for his forgiveness and entertained him (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 79).

These accounts portray al-ʿAṭṭās as someone who is fully committed to his role as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* whose main task is to instruct the *sunna* to his contemporaries and if need be, to enforce it. He himself is represented as completely following the *sunna*. The *jamāʿa* which revolved around

him is pictured as conforming to the *sunna*, down to their fashion and hairstyle. Al-ʿAṭṭās was also aggressive when it came to witnessing things and acts that oppose the *sunna*. He would shout and even resort to violent means in making sure that others also adopted the Prophetic norms, without fearing the criticism of others or other repercussions that could befall him from adopting such measures. In short, al-ʿAṭṭās was able to enforce the *sunna* upon a *jamāʿa* by, among others, instilling fear in them. Nevertheless, he was prepared to apologize in cases where he thought he acted unjustly, like striking a beardless man for not growing his beard. To return to Goffman's term, these depictions portray al-ʿAṭṭās as someone who was *embraced* by his *shaykh al-taʿlīm* role, leaving no significant distance between his self and his role.

To be embraced by a role involves overcoming skittish behavior that might cause a wedge between oneself and one's role. At the same time it involves disallowing other roles to hold one's self and overturn a complete embracement. Here, al-ʿAṭṭās' asceticism and his refusal to partake in worldly activities became crucial to the success of his embracement, as these hagiographical accounts illustrate:

> The wealthy and those with authority have tried to get close to him with different worldly means (*al-wasāʾil al-dunyawiyya*). But he rejected those containers filled with money (*rubiyāt*) and those magnificent gifts with stern rejection. He threw them in front of the givers whilst shouting with cries that surprised them, as if he was bitten by a poisonous snake, and said: "do not burn me with your fire!" (*lā taḥraqūnī bi nārikum*). Such attempts turned him to become even more stern in commanding the right and forbidding the wrong. From then on, people began to realize that he was only upset for Allāh's sake, and he was only happy for His sake. Consequently, they respected him completely. They served and helped him. On his forehead the light of Allāh's speech, "if you help Allāh, He will help you and make you stand firm" [Q. 47:7] gleamed radiantly (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II 317).

> It has been related to me that one day a man who practiced usury (*ribā*) sent some money (*darāhim*) to his [al-ʿAṭṭās'] house. The money was received by his family without him knowing. They were in need of gas (*qāz*) at that time. So they bought gas with that

> money and lighted the house with it. When he returned from the mosque and entered the house, he suddenly screamed and said "what darkness has befallen my home?" (*mā hadhihi al-ẓulma fī baytī*). His family then told him what happened. He then instructed them to return what was left of the money to the sender. He also instructed them to dig a hole and throw the remaining gas there (al-Ḥaddād 2009: I, 726).
>
> When uncle Aḥmad (al-ʿAṭṭās) married off the two sons of his brother ʿAlawī, namely, ʿAbdallāh and Muḥammad, he held a big and blessed celebration attended by many virtuous people from amongst his kinsfolk and those who loved him. They came from faraway places. They stayed joyfully in Pekalongan for several nights. These guests brought gifts for the grooms and brides. After the wedding was over, we gave all the money that we received from the guests to uncle Aḥmad, and thereafter I went home to Semarang where I lived in those days. I felt really tired and I had just arrived home when uncle Aḥmad called me and asked me to return to Pekalongan. When I arrived at his house, I found him shouting, saying "get that money out of my house, for last night I dreamt that I have polluted my fertilizer!" (*ukhrujū al-darāhim min baytī liannanī raʾaytu al-bāriḥa annī akhama dammān*) . I took the money away and I gave it to the grooms (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 80).

These are just three, among many, anecdotes describing al-ʿAṭṭās' ascetic lifestyle. They portray how he refused to accept the help and assistance of the wealthy and the powerful for fear of jeopardizing his own steadfastness of following the *sunna* and his moral high ground in articulating it to others.[104] Accepting gifts or financial assistance from those of questionable repute could make him indebted to them, which in turn, could soften his position as an unrelenting enforcer of the *sunna* and create a wedge between his self and his role. Ascetic lifestyle helped to ensure that the fertilizer used to cultivate a healthy *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* was not polluted by unrelated interests.

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[104] In fact, one of his hagiographers noted this point:

> I [ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAṭṭās] say: perhaps the readers are amazed by his [al-ʿAṭṭās'] influence and strong authority even in relation to the rulers. To this I say: If the reason has become clear, the amazement will dissipate (*idhā ẓahara al-sabab zāla al-ʿajab*). And the sole reason that allowed him to reach such an elevated station (*al-martaba al-ʿāliya*) was his renunciation (*zuhdihi*) of, and loath for wealth and worldly position (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II 317).

In other words, his ascetic lifestyle (*zuhd*) allowed him to maintain a moral high ground, thereby facilitating his *embracement* of and by the role of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm*.

Al-ʿAṭṭās' embracement of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* role is portrayed by his hagiographers as what facilitated divine succor upon him, and made him recognizable to others as a saint. *Karāma* (Ind. *keramat*) or saintly marvels/miracles, which are considered by Muslims to be one important sign pointing to the saintliness of a person, are presented in his hagiographies, among others, his ability to miraculously assist others in following the *sunna* as illustrated in the following anecdote:

> Once, he instructed one of his disciples to become the imam of the Friday prayer in the congregational mosque, although that person had never led a prayer with such a large *jamāʿa*. When he stood at the *miḥrāb*, he trembled with fear and awkwardness until he could not say the *takbīr* [the phrase 'God is Great' uttered by the Imam that marked the beginning of the prayer]. He could not feel anything but suddenly the hand of our master Aḥmad [al-ʿAṭṭās] passed by his face and chest. With the passing of the hand, all of his fear and trembling disappeared and he was able to lead the prayer. When that happened, our master Aḥmad was standing far away in the back row and his sight was obstructed by the pulpit (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 24).

Despite the various miracles attributed to al-ʿAṭṭās, his hagiographers remain unequivocal in portraying him as someone who did not allow saintly authority or marvels to detract him and others from the more important task of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* The following anecdote concerns a discussion that took place in al-ʿAṭṭās' presence regarding his saintly ancestor, ʿAlī b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1172/1758), the founder of the *ḥawṭa* of Mashhad in Ḥaḍramawt and whose tomb remains an important pilgrimage site to the present day:

> One day, the name of Habib ʿAlī b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās was mentioned in his presence. One of those in the room said, "Habib ʿAlī b. Ḥasan once said, "those who see me, and those who see those who see me, will be in heaven" (*nāẓirī wa nāẓir nāẓirī fī al-janna*). One wealthy notable, known for his tendency to mix good deeds and wrongdoings, and who was also in the room suddenly said, "Praise to Allāh, I have seen the servant of Habib ʿAlī!". Thereupon Habib Aḥmad stood up like an angered lion and told him, "Sir, there were many of those who saw the Prophet Muḥammad and ended up in hell. And what is that compared to seeing ʿAlī b. Ḥasan? And what do you have compared to ʿAlī b.

> Ḥasan?”. What he means is that there is no use of talking without following the *sunna* (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II 320).

The hagiographical portrayals of al-ʿAṭṭās, which give an indication of how he has generally been perceived by the Bā ʿAlawīs, present him as a saint whose saintliness springs from his indefatigable *embracement* of the *shaykh al-taʿlīm* role. While miracles or marvels are taken as evidence of saintliness, these are not the basis of saintliness, at least for the Ḥaddādian Bā ʿAlawīs. Authoritative saints are fundamentally posited as uncompromising and divinely-assisted connectors between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.*

When one fully embraces a role, however, one may be perceived by others as being embraced by that role, due to the collapsing of distance separating the self and the role. Such an agentive ambiguity is central to the dominant theories of Sufi sainthood and was indeed used as a framework through which other actors have evaluated some of al-ʿAṭṭās’ controversial acts like shouting at people or even striking them. Observe the following hagiographical passage:

> Our teacher Habīb Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs [al-Ḥabashī], in the verses of a poem he wrote for an inhabitant of Pekalongan, has unveiled the secrets about the spiritual state of Habib Aḥmad [al-ʿAṭṭās] that made him to act the way he did whenever he witnessed wrongdoings … In these verses he points to his [al-ʿAṭṭās] perfected *istighrāq* (immersion/absorption) and his removal [from the world] through witnessing (*mushāhada*) the lights of the sacred presence of the Unique [God] (*anwār al-ḥaḍra al-aḥādiyya al-muqaddasa*). Until he no longer had the ability to contain the various [human] dispositions, had not God — with His mercy — returned him to the creation to benefit them. He is awestruck when he leaves the immersion (*istighrāq*) of witnessing (*mushādaha*) [and returns] to address the creation and witnessing others. This is the cause of his outcry (*al-ṣayḥa*) that can be heard from him from time to time and in relation to some people (al-Ḥaddād 2009: I, 726-7).

In this passage, the author provides a justification for al-ʿAṭṭās’ behavior by drawing on the authority of one of the leading late nineteenth/early twentieth century Bā ʿAlawī *shaykh al-taʿlīms* Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs al-Ḥabashī (d. 1337/1919). Al-Ḥabashī had written a poem for

an unnamed inhabitant of Pekalongan, in which he explains al-ʿAṭṭās' spiritual station. One may suggest that the mere fact that al-Ḥabashī saw the need to provide a rationale for al-ʿAṭṭās' acts to someone in Pekalongan indicates that there were people — perhaps even from amongst his *jamāʿa* — who were troubled by such acts. What is interesting, is that al-Ḥabashī's explanation for al-ʿAṭṭās' actions points to their agentive ambiguity. Al-Ḥabashī portrays al-ʿAṭṭās as someone who at times was immersed or absorbed — using the technical Sufi term *istighrāq* that was also used to describe Habib ʿUmar's sermon (see case III) — by the witnessing of the divine presence. The awestricken transitional moments between the passing of the spiritual immersion and the regaining of normal consciousness is posited as the true source of his erratic behavior and action. Al-ʿAṭṭās was not fully conscious when he performed those acts. The action may be his, but the real agent remains ambiguous.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked at the notion of *connector,* namely actors involved in the project of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. While in Chapter 2, I examined the *shaykh al-taʿlīms*, here I observed those who are recognized as saints. I have shown how according to Sufi paradigms of sainthood accepted by my interlocutors, saints are *connectors* due to their role as diminutive prophets — or inheritors of the prophets — who bridge the divine and the human. Saints, whether *sālik* or pure *jadab,* are perceived as translucent screens through which divine light shimmers and, to a certain extent, becomes perceivable to others, generating agentive and enunciative ambiguities. Fundamental to this idea is the assumption that (1) humans are porous subjects formed through the interlacing of different soco-discursive formations (without however rejecting a limited and always conditional degree of subjective agency); and (2) any particular

configurations of action and agency that are open to dislocation and redistribution. Saints, like prophets, emerge as heteroglossic assemblages. They are *intersections* between the divine and the human, the Prophetic and the mundane.

Not all saints, however, are *connectors* in the technical sense of connecting the Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. A pure *Jadab* — someone who is acted upon by the divine without having discursive control — can work against a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* by substituting the centrality of Prophetic authority with his own. Here lies the importance of Sufi spiritual training and discipline (*sulūk*) as enshrined in Sufi *ṭarīqas* to prepare and condition actors for divine attraction that may or may not occur. Central to most *ṭarīqas* is immersion in the Prophetic *sunna*. The idea is to emulate the Prophet thoroughly, including the way one speaks and acts, to have discursive control like he had, and to be able to animate the divine in ways that reinforce Prophetic authority and particular alignments between Prophetic *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*.

Insofar as the Qurʾān is posited as eternal divine speech, and to the extent that animating the Qurʾān and weaving it to one's own voice is a skill that can be mastered, then *shaykh al-taʿlīms* — whose authority is based on textual mastery — have the potentials to become recognized by others as saints, more so if they follow a Sufi *ṭarīqa,* and even more so when they have Prophetic genealogy. Animating divine voice and weaving it into their own discourse may generate enunciative ambiguities that enable others to perceive them as subjects who have been embraced by the role. To do so, however, they need to overcome their distance from their animating role by liberating themselves from other roles that might hold on to them and disallow complete embracement; precisely the goal of Sufism.

This chapter proposes a historical and anthropological approach to the study of sainthood that shifts the analysis from the saintly life to the saintly role. Such a shift compels us to take seriously situations "where a person is labeled a saint and his or her behavior interpreted within the parameters of saintly performance" (Kleinberg 1992:7). It relocates analytic focus on interactions that matter, as much of what saints do "is unrelated to their saintly performance and should not be included in a social study of sainthood" (*Ibid*). One should thus not ask how a saint, *qua* saint, is expected to act in an interaction, but how individuals become recognizable as saints through such interactions and how others react when encountering those whom they recognize as saints. Saints are fundamentally mediators, and as such, they should be situated in relation to other actors who may or may not recognize their mediatory roles. Recognition of saintliness may certainly lead to the emergence of an effervescent *jamāʿa,* but for it to become a durable social assemblage, more work remains to be done. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter IV

The *Manṣabate* of Pekalongan

> The Sayyids, on the other hand, sat around me, and presently rose with a flutter of respect to greet the entry of the Mansab of Meshed, the Patriarch, Ahmad al-ʿAttas. He rules the valley below Hajarain, where the jurisdiction of Makalla ends. He came in regally, voluminous in a velvet gown, green, with a yellow turban on his head; before him, in his hand, a silver-headed cane; he was portly, benevolent and active, his open face surrounded with curls of grey beard and hair; a ribbon of green and red velvet was thrown over one shoulder: he carried himself lightly, with ease of sure authority and a manner paternally affectionate. He looked at me with quiet twinkling eyes while he sipped his tea, and a young man from Java, anxious to show off a knowledge of European ways, badgered me to show my non-existent diplomas.
>
> -Freya Stark, *The Southern Gates of Arabia*

On the outskirts of Pekalongan's public cemetery of Sapuro, stands the mausoleum of Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭālib al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1347/1929), a saintly Bā ʿAlawī *shaykh al-taʿlīm* whom we have encountered in the last chapter. Everyday, visitors from Pekalongan and other faraway places come to the mausoleum to pay their respect to the scholar who is popularly referred to as the city's principal saint, or *ṣāḥib al-balad.* The number of visitors significantly increases on auspicious times such as Thursday night or Friday morning, or prior to Ramaḍān when Javanese Muslims welcome the inception of the holy month by visiting the graves of saints, scholars, and family members, a practice commonly known as *nyekar* (spreading flowers). In front of the mausoleum is a small bazar selling local commodities like *batik* cloth, *sarongs*, prayer caps, and perfumes. Busses transporting pilgrims are parked along the road leading to the mausoleum,

bearing license plates from all over Java. Some local residents living around the mausoleum have transformed parts of their houses into modest inns catering to the steady flow of out-of-town pilgrims in need of accommodation.

Figure 4.1: The Mausoleum of Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās

Figure 4.2: The Interior of the Mausoleum

The mausoleum houses the tombs of al-ʿAṭṭās and his immediate family. Al-ʿAṭṭās' elevated tombstone stands on a ceramic plinth next to his wife's at the center of the hallowed square chamber. Pilgrims sit around the tomb, reciting the Qurʾān, greeting the deceased saint, or supplicating for God's grace through the saint's intercessory power.[105] The tombstone white

[105] For the people I work with, entering the vicinity of a saint's tomb demands proper greeting, etiquette, and conduct, as if they are entering the house of a living saint.Thus those who fail to do so are likened to impolite guests who violated the hospitality of their host. In a sermon, Ḥabīb Luthfi once related the saying of the Damascene scholar Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350): "honoring (*menghormati*) the dead at the tomb is like honoring him in the house where he lived during his life as the grave has become his new abode." One pilgrim I met at the tomb of Sunan Ampel in Surabaya, East Java, explained to me that failure to observe the proper conduct when visiting a saint's tomb is equal to implying that the saint is dead, "which is contrary (*tidak sesuai*) to what the Qurʾān states!".

marble, tarnished with the marks of history, is engraved with fading black Arabic inscriptions announcing al-ʿAṭṭās spiritual station:

> This is the tomb of the reviver of the *sunna* (*muḥyi al-sunan*) and the conferrer of gifts (*muqallid al-minan*), the flowing sea (*al-baḥr al-ẓākhir*) and the brilliant moon (*al-badr al-bāhir*), the one who revealed the Truth (*al-ṣādiʿ bi-l-ḥaqq*), who dispelled with it [the truth] the darkness of misguidances (*wa al-dāmigh bihi ẓulumāt al-aḍālīl*) and repelled with its proofs the whispers of the people of error (*wa al-rādiʿ bi bayyinātihi wasāwis ahl al-abāṭīl*). The sublime prelate (*al-ḥabr al-jalīl*), the celebrated Imam (*al-imām al-ḥafīl*), the knowing master (*al-jahbadh al-ʿalīm*), the one who is at the forefront of every region (*al-muqaddam bi kullī iqlīm*), the prime of primes (*ṣadr al-ṣudūr*), great in majesty (*ʿaẓīm al-jalālah*), the one who is famous in his reputation (*al-dhāʾiʿ al-ṣīt*), whose statements are heard (*masmūʿ al-maqālah*), the pride of the epochs (*fakhr al-aʿṣār*), the radiance of the lands (*bahāʾ al-amṣār*), the disseminator of the banners of honor (*nāshir alwiyat al-fakhār*), the best of the pure lineage (*naqwat al-ʿiṭrah al-aṭhār*), the noble descendant of the Prophet (*al-sayyid al-sharīf*), the knower of God (*al-ʿārif bi-llāh*), the beloved (*al-ḥabīb*) Aḥmad bin ʿAbdallāh bin Ṭālib al-ʿAṭṭās the ʿAlawī (*al-ʿalawī*), the Ḥusaynī (*al-ḥusaynī*), the Ḥaḍramī (*al-ḥaḍramī*). May God benefit us with his [al-ʿAṭṭās] blessings. He passed away on Sunday, 25th of the ever-flowing month of Rajab in the year 1347 [January 7 1929], having reached the age of ninety one.

The elaborate and poetically structured inscription declares al-ʿAṭṭās as the offspring and inheritor of the Prophet Muḥammad, as well as the reviver of his *sunna*.

Every year, on the fourteenth of Shaʿbān, two weeks before the beginning of the holy month of Ramadān, thousands of pilgrims descend into Pekalongan to attend the *ḥawl* (commemoration) of al-ʿAṭṭās. Muslim scholars — Bā ʿAlawī and others — come with their families and followers from all over Java, Sumatra, even as far as Ḥaḍramawt and Saudi Arabia. The *ḥawl* is led by one of al-ʿAṭṭās' descendants who is recognized as his official successor, or *al-qāʾim bi-l-maqām,* meaning one who stands in his place. It involves collective visits to al-ʿAṭṭās' tomb, praying for the saint, reciting his hagiography (*manāqib*), the delivery of sermons by different scholars in attendance, and concludes with a communal feast.[106]

[106] For more on the rituals and procedural details of the *ḥawl,* see: Alatas 2014.

In this chapter, I examine the processes through which a Ḥaddādian *shaykh al-taʿlīm* became posthumously identified as a principal saint of a Javanese city. What processes enabled his tomb to become a prominent pilgrimage destination? What kind of *jamāʿa* did this *reviver of the sunna* — to use the description on the tombstone — constitute, and what enables it to endure and expand after his death? What and who is his official successor, otherwise known as *manṣab*? What authority does he command? These questions direct us to the various operations associated with the formation and maintenance of a durable social formation. Observing the case of the principal saint of Pekalongan allows us to concretely chart a particular development of a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa,* which in this case modestly began with a migrating *shaykh al-taʿlīm* and his students and grew to become a *manṣabate* or a local saintly dynasty led by a *manṣab* whose authority is recognized by his *jamāʿa,* other *manṣabs* and scholars, and local political structures.

While this chapter only looks at one particular case, it can nevertheless help us to comprehend similar processes that have occurred in other parts of Java. Al-ʿAṭṭās is just one among several Ḥaḍramī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* who subsequently became recognized as a saint associated with a Javanese city, and whose *jamāʿa* gradually developed into a *manṣabate*. A 1434/2013 calendar published by an Islamic study group (*majelis taklim*) in Malang, East Java, and sold at stalls around saintly mausoleums illustrates this (figure 4.3 & 4.4). The calendar contains photos of notable Bā ʿAlawī saints and *manṣabs* and a yearlong agenda of Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia. It lists 52 major Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* annually commemorated at different places in different times (see: appendix C). There are at least three Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in a month. Each of these *ḥawls* is organized and led by a *manṣab*. These *manṣabs* are regarded not only as the heads of their saintly families but also as major local or regional

religious authorities. To a certain extent, the contextualized picture developed in this chapter can therefore be used to comprehend the emergence of other Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabates* in Java.

Figure 4.3: A 1434/2013 calendar of Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia, featuring the portraits of different Bā ʿAlawī saints and *manṣabs*.

AGENDA HAUL PARA HABAIB DAN ACARA KEAGAMAAN SE-INDONESIA, MALAYSIA & SINGAPURA

SYA'BAN			
1	Sabtu Sore, Minggu I	Haul Al Imam Sultonul Mala' Al Habib Abdulloh Al- Akbar Bin Abi Bakar Alaydrus, Sekudai, Johor Bahru	Malaysia
2	Sabtu I / II Ashar	Haul Sunan Ampel di Masjid Ampel	Surabaya
3	Ahad I / II Pagi sesudah Ampel	Haul Habib Abdulqadir bin Alwi Assegaf	Tuban
4	Ahad Pertama Pagi	Haul Sayyid Yusuf Al Anggowi Al Hasani, Telangu	Sumenep
5	Tanggal 10 Pagi	Haul Habib Ba'Alwi Al-Syatiri Al-Qudsi Kampung Bandan	Jakarta Utara
6	Tanggal 14 Pagi	Haul Habib Ahmad bin Tolib Alattas	Pekalongan
7	Tanggal 15 Pagi	Haul Habib Muhammad bin Tohir Alhaddad	Tegal
8	Tanggal 16 Pagi	Haul Habib Muhammad bin Abdurrahman Assegaf, Indramayu	Jawa Barat
9	Sabtu III Ba'dal Maghrib	Haul Habib Ali bin Abdurrahman Alhabsyi Kwitang	Jakarta
10	Jumat, Sabtu dan Ahad setelah Nishfu Sya'ban	Rangkaian Acara Ziarah Kubra dan Haul Habaib dan Ulama Palembang Darussalam	Palembang
11	Jum'at Terakhir Ashar	Haul Habib Salim bin Toha Alhaddad Damai Kalibata	Jakarta
12	Ahad Terakhir ba'dal Maghrib	Haul Habib Ahmad bin Alwi Alhaddad Rawajati Kalibata	Jakarta

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Figure 4.4: A 1434/2013 calendar of Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia, featuring the portraits of different Bā ʿAlawī saints and *manṣabs*.

Reviving the *Sunna*

The nucleus of the Aṭṭāsian *manṣabate* of Pekalongan lies in the Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* cultivated by al-ʿAṭṭās during his lifetime. Soon after his arrival in Pekalongan in the early 1880s, al-ʿAṭṭās took up the position of an *imam* of a mosque at the Arab quarter of Pekalongan and began teaching there (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II, 312; Shahabuddin 2000: 62). The mosque was built a few decades earlier by a financially successful Ḥaḍramī migrant. At the mosque al-ʿAṭṭās taught legal *mukhtaṣars* and simplified creeds and led the recitation of the *rātib* (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II, 312). Al-ʿAṭṭās also instituted the recitation of the Bukhārī collection of Prophetic *ḥadīths* during the month of Rajab, and held a big celebration upon its conclusion. For the whole month during the holy month of Ramaḍān he recited and taught the *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-dīniyya* (Religious Counsel) of al-Ḥaddād following the afternoon prayer. To administer the growing number of his *jamāʿa*, in 1913 al-ʿAṭṭās led a project of renovating and enlarging the mosque, securing funds from wealthy Ḥaḍramī entrepreneurs (Shahabuddin 2006: 62-3). He also built a *madrasa* called *Salafiyya* next to the mosque where he and some of his advanced students taught legal *mukhtaṣars* and simplified creeds to local children (al-Ḥaddād 2009: I, 728).

The mosque and the *madrasa* became the base from which al-ʿAṭṭās was able to cultivate a growing *jamāʿa*. Observe the following description of al-ʿAṭṭās' *jamāʿa* written by his son ʿUmar:

> Among the practices of my father was that every Thursday night and Friday morning he occupied himself with the remembrance of Allāh (*dhikrullāh*), praising the Prophet, and reciting Qurʾānic *suras* that have been specified by the *sunna* to be recited on Thursday night and Friday morning. Among them, *sūra al-Kahf, Yā Sīn, al-Dukhān, al-Wāqiʾa*, and *al-Mulk*, all of which were recited between the twilight prayer and the night prayer, and between the dawn prayer and the sunrise. He recited them at the mosque and used them to substitute for the regular *rātib*. He recited them collectively with those who were

> present with beautiful voice. When reciting the verses, he made quick stops at the prescribed places as the Prophet did as reported in the *ḥadīth.* If you look at his circle during those times, you will see them forming a gradated ring (*mudawwira madrūja*) like a beautifully shaped circle. No one sat ahead or behind the others. He chided those whose sitting position ruffles that beautiful form (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 76).

This description illustrates the shape of al-ʿAṭṭās' *jamāʿa* whose existence was continually performed through gatherings and bodily co-presence among people who knew each other. Every day, al-ʿAṭṭās and his *jamāʿa* recited the *rātib.* Every Thursday night and Friday morning they recited some Qurʾānic *sūras,* following the twilight and dawn prayer respectively. The recitation was led by al-ʿAṭṭās who sat surrounded by his *jamāʿa* and taught them how to recite in accordance with the *sunna*. The hierarchically-structured assemblage was premised on the recognition of a connector who articulated the *sunna* to those who made up the *jamāʿa*.

While al-ʿAṭṭās can be described as a Ḥaddādian *shaykh al-taʿlīm* who stressed the centrality of the *mukhtaṣar*, the simplified creed, and the *rātib*, he also taught the more advanced Sufī texts to a restricted *jamāʿa*. This exclusive circle took place not at the mosque but at his house. A member of the āl-Shahāb mercantile family — previously discussed in chapter two — who studied with al-ʿAṭṭās at his house described these private interactions:

> After I got married, I went back and forth to Pekalongan, once or twice a year. There I attended the study circle at the house of our father Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭālib al-ʿAṭṭās. I read numerous books under his guidance. Among them, the *Risāla al-muʿāwana* [Treatise on Assistance] of Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥaddād, the *ʿIqd al-yawāqīt* [Knot of Rubies] of Habīb ʿAydarūs b. ʿUmar, the *Iḍāh asrār ʿulūm al-muqarrabīn* [Clarifying the Secrets of the Knowledges of the Drawn Near] of Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAydarūs, *al-Anwār al-Muḥammadiyya* [The Muḥammadan Lights] of al-Nabhānī, *al-Riyāḍ al-munīqa* [The Purifying Garden], *al-Waṣīyya al-marḍīyya* [The Satisfying Counsel] , and *al-Khulāṣa* [The Synopsis], all of which were written by Ḥabīb ʿAlī b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās. After I finished reading *al-Khulāṣa* with him, on 16 Muḥarram 1324/ 1 April 1906, he bestowed upon me a license (*ijāza*) for all the narrations… Towards the end of his life, he instructed me to read *al-Iḥyāʾ* [of Ghazālī] (Shahabuddin 2000: 61-2).

The studied texts are mostly on Sufism, particularly the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. It includes the works of al-Ḥaddād and other Bā ʿAlawī scholars as well as the work of the *muftī* of Lebanon, Yūsuf al-Nabhānī (d. 1350/1932), known for his defense of Sufism against the criticism of modern Muslim reformists. Al-ʿAṭṭās also guided some of his students in spiritual wayfaring (*sulūk*) and invested them with the robe of Sufi investiture (*libās al-khirqa*). In a letter to al-ʿAṭṭās' son ʿAlī (d. 1992), the author of the five volume *History of Ḥaḍramī Poets* (*Tārīkh al-shuʿarāʾ al-ḥaḍramiyyīn*), ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf describes his interaction with al-ʿAṭṭās:

> I have accompanied him [al-ʿAṭṭās] in perfect companionship (*mulāzama tāmma*), and learnt the life of a Sufi from him (*taṣawwaftu ʿalayhi*). I also learnt from his many books of the pious predecessors (*al-salaf*). Several times he invested in me the robe (*albasanī*) and granted me *ijāzas.* The last robe was sent to me in Mecca through *sayyid* ʿAbdallāh b. Hārūn bin Shihāb, who was instructed to represent him and invest the robe on me. So he [bin Shihāb] invested the robe to me in the Grand Mosque of Mecca in the month of Shawwāl 1342 (1923). I do not keep secret from you and say that in many occasions our father [al-ʿAṭṭās] unveiled to me many unveilings (*kathīran mā kāshafanī bimukāshafāt*). And I have written down many of his sayings, but regretfully, they were taken away by the Wahhabīs when they conquered Ṭāʾif in 1343 (1924). They took away all of what I had, including the sayings of your father. Truly, there is no regret deeper than losing that compilation (quoted in al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 29).

Both accounts indicate that while al-ʿAṭṭās' principal role was that of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm,* to a select few, he also played the role of a Sufi *murshid* (guide). That is, as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm*, al-ʿAṭṭas primary role revolved around teaching a set of texts to his *jamāʿa*, while as a Sufi *murshid*, his role was involved teaching his select disciples by examples while personally directing their spiritual development by prescribing litanies and invocations tailored for the need of each of his disciples.

The livelihood of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* like al-ʿAṭṭās, who apart from serving as an imam of a mosque and teaching, did not hold any official position or engage in mercantile activities,

depended on the support of the wealthy members of the Ḥaḍramī diaspora. One surviving letter, written by al-ʿAṭṭās to the scion of the wealthy al-Junayd family of Singapore, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Junayd al-Junayd (d. 1369/1950) illustrates this relationship.[107] In the letter, al-ʿAṭṭās requests financial assistance from al-Junayd's to pay a government house tax (*fersel*) to the sum of three hundred rupiah (al-Junayd 1994: 342-3). Apart from maintaining ties with the Ḥaḍramī economic elites, al-ʿAṭṭās also sustained connections with other Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Java, the Hejaz, and Ḥaḍramawt. While not as mobile as Ibn Yaḥyā, al-ʿAṭṭās actively wrote letters to his fellow scholars.[108] The letters clearly demonstrate how al-ʿAṭṭās maintained regular communication with Bā ʿAlawī scholars — including his teachers and disciples — around the Indian Ocean. He used letters to issue and request *ijāza*, provide counsel, convey holiday greetings, and describe the developments of his *daʿwa*. Many of these letters were sent to accompany gifts like clothes, printed books, and aloe woods. These correspondences further show how al-ʿAṭṭās was highly respected by his peers. His authority in religious matters was widely accepted to the extent that scholars sent him their unpublished works and requested for his approval.

A Ḥaḍramī *Jamāʿa*

So who were the members of al-ʿAṭṭās' *jamāʿa*? While today the annual *ḥawl* draws the participation of thousands of people — the majority of whom are Javanese — during his lifetime the *jamāʿa* mainly consisted of members of the Ḥaḍramī diaspora. Al-ʿAṭṭās after all did not speak Javanese or Indonesian fluently. He lived amongst his fellow Ḥaḍramīs in the *Kampung*

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[107] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Junayd was the grandson of ʿUmar al-Junayd with whom Ibn Yaḥyā stayed during his sojourn in Singapore (see chapter 2).

[108] Many of his letters have been compiled by his grandson Aḥmad b. ʿUmar b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās (2006).

Arab (Arab quarter) of Pekalongan and did not travel much. Even in Pekalongan, he was not known to the ordinary people as the following hagiographical anecdote makes clear:

> One day, Habib Aḥmad went to the goat market to buy a goat head. He bought one and paid according to its price. But the seller refused to sell it and asked for more. Along came another person who was standing nearby and told the seller to just sell the goat head to Habib Aḥmad for the previously agreed price. He told the seller, "This Habib is *keramat!"* (Ar. *karāma*), meaning that he is a saint (*yaqṣad bihi walī*). Thereupon the seller went to Habib Aḥmad and told him, "take this goat head with the price that master wanted". But Habib Aḥmad had heard the conversation between the seller and the other person and so he declined to buy it (al-ʿAṭṭās 2006: 83).

While the hagiographies listed several Bā ʿAlawī disciples of al-ʿAṭṭās who subsequently became reputable scholars, they do not mention any Javanese disciples.[109] Ibn Yaḥyā, for instance — as we have learnt in chapter 2 — had Javanese disciples despite his attachment to the Ḥaḍramī mercantile families in Singapore and Java. Al-ʿAṭṭās' *jamāʿa*, however, seemed to consist almost exclusively of Ḥaḍramīs. This, I would suggest was a direct consequence of three major developments that took place within the Ḥaḍramī diasporic community of Java: population growth, diversification of migrants, and segregation.

By the time al-ʿAṭṭās arrived in Java in the late nineteenth century, the Ḥaḍramī diasporic community was significantly larger than in the days of Ibn Yaḥyā. The unstable political condition in Ḥaḍramawt and the decrease of transportation cost following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, had resulted in a flood of Ḥaḍramī migrants to the Dutch East Indies. In Java alone, the number of Ḥaḍramī population rose from 4992 in 1859 to 10.999 in 1885, while

[109] See chapter 3 for the list of al-ʿAṭṭās' hagiographies. In Pekalongan I heard from different people that one of al-ʿAṭṭās' disciples was Kyai Ma'sum of Lasem (d. 1972). Kyai Ma'sum was one of the most charismatic Javanese scholars who was also one of the titular leaders of the traditionalist Islamic organization, *Nahdlatul ʿUlama*. In Kyai Ma'sum's authorized biography, however, al-ʿAṭṭās is not mentioned as his teacher. The biography, however, mentions that Kyai Ma'sum often traveled to Pekalongan to visit al-ʿAṭṭās' tomb and that he always attended the annual *ḥawl*. The biography also described that prior to building his own *pesantren*, Kyai Ma'sum went to visit al-ʿAṭtas' tomb, recited the Qurʾān there, and spoke to the tomb, "Habib Aḥmad, please ask Allāh to bless me, for I am building a *pesantren* and in need of money to buy lands." Thereupon, al-ʿAṭṭās' spirit appeared to Kyai Ma'sum and prayed for him (Thomafi 2012: 93-5).

in other parts of the Archipelago, the number rose from 2776 in 1859 to 9613 in 1885 (Berg [1886] 1989: 69-70). By 1900, the Arab population in the Dutch East-Indies had increased to around 27.000 (De Jonge 1997: 94). While earlier migrations were dominated by the Bā ʿAlawīs, the new migrants also came from other social strata, including tribesmen (*qabāʾil*).

The flood of Ḥaḍramī migration alarmed the Dutch authorities, exacerbating anti-European, anti-Christian, and Pan-Islamic sentiments. The economic success of earlier Ḥaḍrami migrants and their intimacy with local nobilities further aggravated the authorities (Reid 2003: 11). As early as 1835, the Dutch had begun to observe the mixing tendency among Europeans, foreign Orientals and the indigenous populations (Ong 2005: 13). Consequently, under the rubric of protecting the economic interests of the indigenous population, the Dutch divided the population into four legal categories: the Europeans, those equated to the Europeans like the Japanese, the Foreign Orientals (*Vreemde Osterlingen*) like the Arabs and the Chinese, and the natives (*inlanders*) (de Jonge 1997: 96). In 1866, the Dutch enforced a policy of segregation by introducing the quarter and pass systems (*wijkenstelsel* & *passenstelsel*), which meant that foreign Orientals such as Ḥaḍramīs — now collectively termed "Arabs" — had to live in separate quarters away from the indigenous population and were required to carry pass if they needed to travel (*Ibid*: 97-101). Such a policy proved effective in distancing the Haḍramīs from the indigenous population, particularly the administrative elites or the *priyayis*. Van den Berg reported that by the late nineteenth century, Javanese *priyayis* had stopped their former practice of marrying their daughters to the Ḥaḍramīs ([1886] 1989: 138).

At the same time, colonial policy of segregation distanced the more recent Ḥaḍramī migrants from the older and more established Bā ʿAlawī families, many of whom had

intermarried into Javanese nobility, including the royal family of Yogyakarta. In Pekalongan, the bin Yaḥyā and the Bā ʿAlawī families were the two Bā ʿAlawī families who by the beginning of the twentieth century had been Javanized, adopting Javanese names and lifestyles. They had taken up administrative posts, become *priyayis,* and were no longer literate in Arabic. Some had even dropped their Bā ʿAlawī surnames, opting for Javanese *priyayi* titles and family names, like the Bustaman (bin Yaḥyā) family and the Danuningrat (Bā Shaybān) family.[110] These *Bā ʿAlawī priyayis* preferred to socialize with the Javanese *priyayis* and looked down upon the Ḥaḍramī newcomers of the Arab quarter. By the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the social influence of the *priyayis* in Pekalongan was waning.[111]

Concurrent with decline of the *priyayis* was the industrialization of *batik* production and the expansion of Muslim scholarly networks that simultaneously served as trade and distribution networks (Vuldy 1987). By the 1920s, several Ḥaḍramī newcomers, along with Chinese and Javanese families, formed a concentrated entrepreneurial elite of Pekalongan. Javanese *batik* workers who in earlier times were producing independently at home were gradually forced to work in the ateliers owned by the leading entrepreneurs leading to the rapid proletarianization of the labor force. The Ḥaḍramī newcomers actively took part in this thriving enterprise, and the Arab quarter of Pekalongan became one of the main centers of the bourgeoning *batik* industry. More established Ḥaḍramī families financed *batik* production while providing jobs for the

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[110] There have been a number of influential personalities from both families. The father of modern Indonesian painting, Raden Saleh, and the first Indonesian Secretary of State, Mr. Icksan, were members of the Bustaman family. General Ali Moertopo, a leading political figure in the first half of Soeharto's New Order regime hailed from the Danuningrat family. Other Bā ʿAlawī *priyayi* family names are Suraatmaja and Suradiputra (Bā ʿAbūd) and Nitipraja (al-ʿAydarūs).

[111] Indeed since the mid eighteenth-century, many *priyayi* families in Pekalongan had lost their land holdings with the introduction of the cultivation system and the monetization of the agrarian economy, and their role was reduced to tax collection for the colonial authority (Kumar 1997: 350-1).

newcomers. The bourgeoning Ḥaḍramī population in other urban centers like Batavia (Jakarta), Surabaya, Solo, Cirebon, and Palembang constituted the expanding chain of supply and distribution.

The colonial policy of segregation, the emergence of the Ḥaḍramī *nouveau riche* newcomers, and the concomitant decline of the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis* resulted in separating the newcomers from the older Javanized Bā ʿAlawī families and the intensification of an exclusive Ḥaḍramī group consciousness — or what is usually referred to by my interlocutors (including Habib Luthfi) as *ʿaṣabiyya* (literally means tribalism or clanism) — among the former. To this day, the relationship between the two is more often marked by mutual distrust and condescension of the newcomers towards the old timers. A travelogue/diary by a member of the al-Shahāb family written in the 1930s, for instance, describes the Arabs of Pekalongan as follows:

> In Pekalongan there are numerous branches of the Bā ʿAlawī family, the numbers amount to around twenty-seven branches (*qabīla*). Most of them belong to the al-ʿAṭṭās family. *There are also those who claim they are from* the Bā Shaybān, Bin Yaāhyā, Bā ʿAbūd or al-Saqqāf families. Most of them have assimilated with the Javanese. They dress like the Javanese. The Bā Shaybān family does not marry except among themselves (Shahabuddin 2000: 62). Emphasis added.

The newcomers looked condescendingly towards the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis* who in their view were no longer Arabs and whose genealogical claims needed to be questioned. Consequently, in addition to the established Ḥaḍramī stratification between the Bā ʿAlawī and the non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs (Bujra 1971; Camelin 1997), there emerged a more tacit cultural hierarchy within the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan between the Javanized Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis* like the bin Yaḥyā, the Bā

Shaybān, and the Bā ʿAbūd — whose influences were waning amidst the tides of industrial capitalism —and the *nouveau riche* newcomers like the al-ʿAṭṭās and the al-Shahāb.[112]

The crystallization of the formerly more fluid Ḥaḍramī identity (Ho 2002; Ho 2006) is further attested by the architecture of mosques built by members of the now parochialized diaspora. For example, when al-ʿAṭṭās renovated the mosque in the Arab quarter of Pekalongan in 1913, he redesigned it to resemble the interior of the mosques in Ḥaḍramawt. He even added an iconic Ḥaḍramī style minaret to the mosque (figure 4.5).[113] Ḥaḍramī style mosques and minarets that began to appear in the Arab quarters of Java in the early twentieth century illustrate the intensification of connection between Java and Ḥaḍramawt, facilitated by new technological development. While in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, most Ḥaḍramī migrants who traveled to Southeast Asia did not return to Ḥaḍramawt, the advancement of steamship and the opening of the Suez Canal had facilitated the oscillation of Ḥaḍramīs between Java and Ḥaḍramawt. Al-ʿAṭṭās himself visited Ḥaḍramawt 1894, before returning once again to Pekalongan. Escalating flows of people between Ḥaḍramawt and Java, together with technological mediation like the circulation of photographs, enabled the preservation of memories of Ḥaḍramī landscape and architecture among the diaspora that was not possible in earlier times. While religious edifices constructed by Bā ʿAlawī families in the early nineteenth century took on Malay, Javanese, Ottoman, or even European colonial architecture, those built in the early twentieth century were unmistakably Ḥaḍramī.

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[112] This hierarchy remains in operation down to the present day. While Bā ʿAlawī women are obliged to marry their fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, many members of the al-ʿAṭṭās and the al-Shahāb of Pekalongan tend to discourage their daughters from marrying a bin Yaḥyā or a Bā Shaybān.

[113] During my fieldwork, there were several scholars from Ḥaḍramawt who came to Pekalongan, visited the mosque, and were fascinated by its Ḥaḍramī-style interior. One of them remarked that he felt as if he was entering a mosque in Mukalla (the capital of the Ḥaḍramawt Province).

Figure 4.5:Ḥaḍramī style minarets. From left to right: The Arab Quarter Mosque (Pekalongan), the al-Saqqāf mosque (Solo), the Panggung mosque (Surabaya), the al-Nur mosque (Bogor), the Pekojan mosque (Jakarta).

Consequently, the Ḥaddādian *jamāʿas* cultivated by Ḥaḍramī-born Bā ʿAlawī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* that were mushrooming in the Arab quarters of Java were characteristically Ḥaḍramī. All of al-ʿAṭṭās' classes, for instance, were solely conducted in Arabic. Other aspects of Bā ʿAlawī rituals that developed in Ḥaḍramawt, including ritual drumming and chanting of Bā ʿAlawī Sufi poems, and *Zafīn* dance — annually staged on the eve of al-ʿAṭṭās' *ḥawl* (Alatas 2014) — were performed during his lifetime.[114] Even the ʿīd sermons, delivered in the Arab quarter mosque following both the ʿīd al-fiṭr and ʿīd al-aḍḥā prayers, were taken from the sermons of the celebrated thirteenth century Egyptian preacher, Muḥammad Ibn Nubāta (d. 767/1366) as was

[114] *Zafīn* or *zafn* means to dance or to move one's legs forward and backward in dancing. The term appears in a *ḥadith*, in which the Prophet said to his wife ʿĀʾishah, "would you like to look at the Abyssinian "kicking out" (*zafn*)?" When commenting on this *ḥadīth*, the theologian al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111) explains that *zafn* is dancing that takes place on account of pleasure or yearning (n.d.: II, 300). *Zafīn* (known by various names in the Indonesian Archipelago such as *japin/jipin/jepin/dana*) has been traditionally performed across the Malay world, often incorporating the singing of *pantun* (Malay verse form) to celebrate events associated with weddings, circumcision, and the Prophet's birthday. It took root among the Malay-Islamic communities and gradually spread all over insular Southeast Asia (Nor 2011: 72). Thus during her field research, Birgit Berg witnessed the performance of a regional Gorontalo variant, which she then compares with Arab *zafīn* (Berg 2011: 209). The *zafīn* performed at al-ʿAṭṭās' mosque on the eve of the *ḥawl* and the music that accompanies it is more austere than the various Malay variants, and is more similar to those performed in the Ḥaḍramawt. Only drums (*hājir marāwīs*) and flutes are used.

the practice in the mosques of Ḥaḍramawt. This has remained the case to the present day even when most people listening to the sermons are no longer Arabic literate.

Such a pronounced Ḥaḍramī character seems to characterize most Ḥaddādian *jamāʿas* cultivated by Bā ʿAlawī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Java. Another example of this trend is a contemporary of al-ʿAṭṭās, and another member of the al-ʿAṭṭās family: ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1351/1933), the saint of Bogor, West Java (Alatas 2015: 139-150). Like al-ʿAṭṭās, ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin also built a Ḥaḍramī style mosque, Masjid al-Nur, complete with an iconic Ḥaḍramī minaret in Bogor (figure 4.5). A survey of the condolence letters (*taʿazzī*) addressed to ʿAbdallāh's children on the occasion of his death provides us with a rough indication of the scope of his extended networks. Letters were sent from all over Indonesia, as well as Singapore, Malaysia, Ḥaḍramawt, and Egypt. Out of the 89 extant letters, 66 were written by Bā ʿAlawīs and 20 by non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs. Only 3 were written by non-Arabs (figures 4.6 & 4.7).[115] To a certain extent, this indicates that the sphere of activities of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Ḥaḍramī-born *shaykh al-taʿlīm* like al-ʿAṭṭās and ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin was to a large extent limited to their fellow Ḥaḍramīs.[116]

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[115] Note, however, that this data do not show us who actually attended the funeral, as only those who could not attend would normally write such a letter. Neither do they provide information regarding members of the saint's *jamāʿa* in his locality, who were certainly present during the funeral.

[116] I stress the fact that these two personalities were Ḥaḍramī born and would presumably find it difficult to teach those who were not Arabic literate. In contrast, the sphere of activity of Java-born Bā ʿAlawī *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* was much more inclusive and extensive as illustrated in the careers of ʿUthmān b. ʿAbdallāh bin Yaḥyā (d. 1332/1914) (Kaptein 2014) and his disciple ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥabashī (d. 1387/1968) (Alatas 2011).
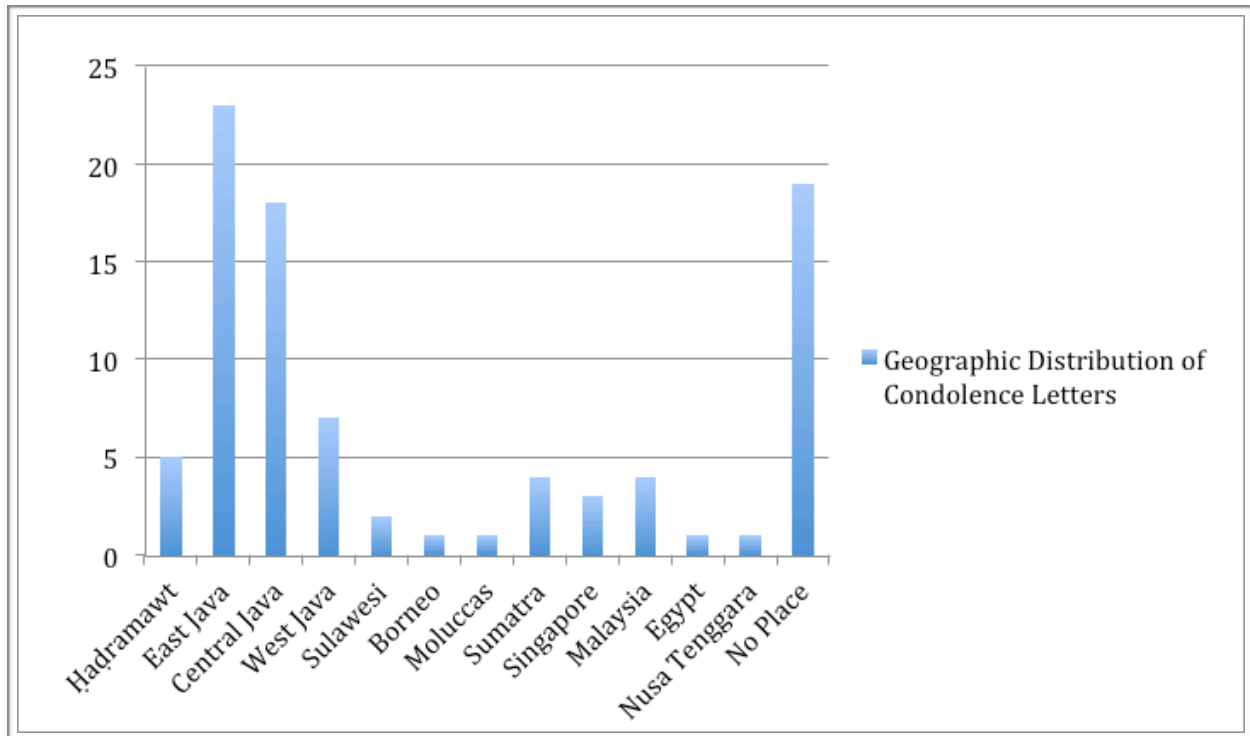
Figure 4.6: Geographical distribution of condolence letters for ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās
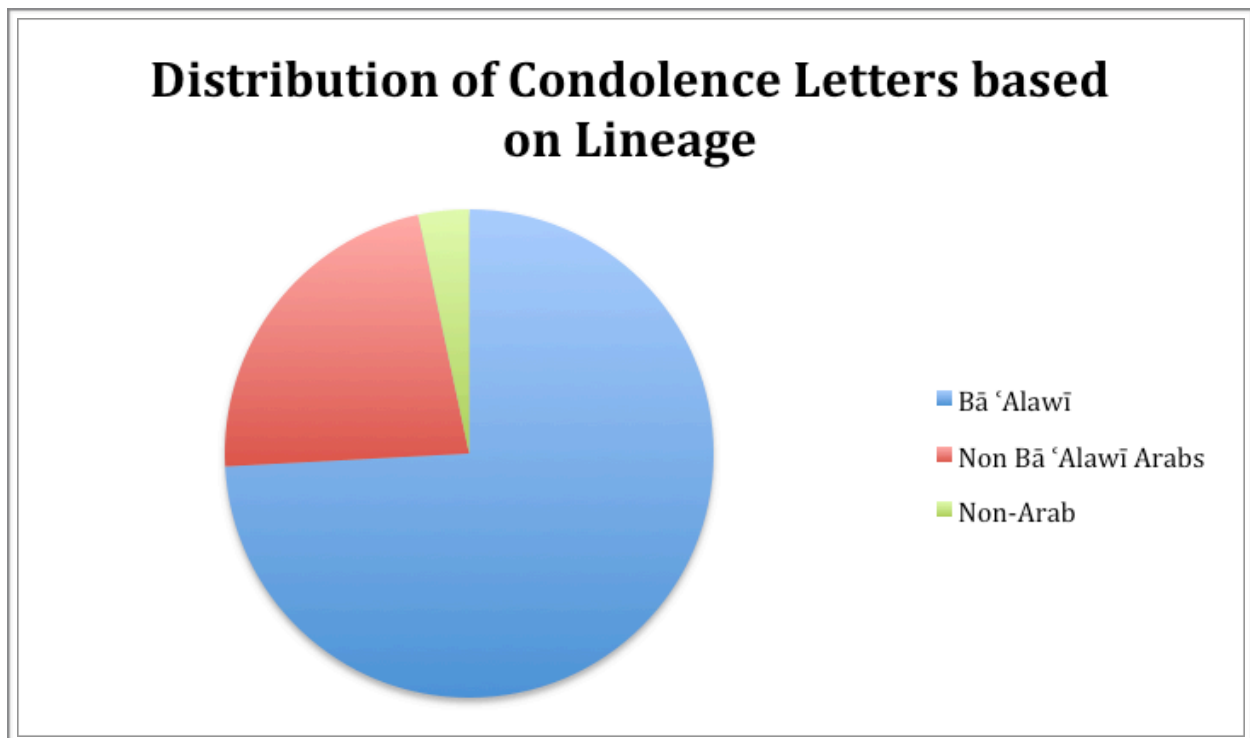
Figure 4.7: Distribution of condolence letters based on lineage.

Manṣabs* without *Ḥawṭas

Pekalongan was one of the preferred destinations for many of the new Ḥaḍramī migrants. The city's thriving indigo, sugar and later on, *batik* industry, together with the presence of a substantial wealthy Ḥaḍramī population were among the important pull factors that drew new migrants to settle there. Most new migrants came from the al-ʿAṭṭās family, and thus they chose to settle in a place where their kinsfolks could be found. Along with the al-ʿAṭṭāses came the members of the Ḥaḍramī tribes who had time-honored ties with them, like the Nahd and the Jaʿda tribes. In Ḥaḍramawt, these two tribes reign over the territories where members of the al-ʿAṭṭās family had established their *ḥawṭas* including Ḥurayḍā (founded by the family's eponym, ʿUmar al-ʿAṭṭās) and Mashhad (founded by ʿAlī b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās).[117]

As discussed in chapter 1, charismatic Bā ʿAlawī scholars have for long constituted *jamāʿas* among the Ḥaḍramī tribes and established sacred sanctuaries in their territories. These tribes, in turn, recognize the socio-religious authority of those scholars and their descendants. Tribes like the Nahd and the Jaʿda, for instance, only recognized the *sulṭa rūhiyya* (spiritual power) of the al-ʿAṭṭās family. Male members of the al-ʿAṭṭās family married into these tribes, thereby cementing such ties into affinal kinship. Thus members of the al-ʿAṭṭās family would refer to a male elder from the Nahd or the Jaʿda tribes as *khāl* or maternal uncle. For this reason, when members of these tribes migrated to Java, they settled in places where members of the al-ʿAṭṭās family already resided, including Pekalongan. Consequently, these tribal migrants began to revolve around Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās, whom they recognized not only as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* but also as a *manṣab*, a hereditary successor of the two aforementioned *ḥawṭa* founders. The Arab

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[117] The genealogy of the Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās of Pekalongan is as follows: Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ṭālib b. ʿAlī b. Ḥasan b. ʿ**Alī** b. Ḥasan b. ʿAbdallāh b. Ḥusayn b. ʿ**Umar** al-ʿAṭṭās. The names of the two *ḥawṭa* founders are in bold.

quarter of Pekalongan, populated by the al-ʿAṭṭās, the Nahd, and the Jaʿda, thus became a satellite of the *ḥawṭas* of Hurayḍa and Mashhad, and the relationship between these three groups began to resemble their relationship in Ḥaḍramawt.

Similar dynamic also occurred in other places in Java involving other *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* from Bā ʿAlawī families who had tribal *jamāʿas* in Ḥaḍramawt. Two examples, from among al-ʿAṭṭās' contemporaries, illustrate this dynamic:

1. Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs al-Ḥabashī. Born in 1849, al-Ḥabashī was a descendant of Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥabashī (d. 1144/1731), a student of al-Ḥaddād and the founder of the *ḥawṭa* of Khalʿ Rāshid (also known as *ḥawṭat* Aḥmad bin Zayn). The *ḥawṭa* was carved from the territories of several Kathīri tribes including the Bin Ṭālib and the Bin ʿAbdād. Al-Ḥabashī's family was recognized by these tribes as their spiritual leader, and both his father and uncle served as *manṣabs*. Al-Ḥabashī came to Java in the late nineteenth century, where he partook in intermediary trade and became wealthy. Known for his philanthropic activities, al-Ḥabashī founded several mosques, schools, libraries, and study circles. He was especially regarded by the Kathīris who had migrated to Java as their spiritual leader. He died in Surabaya in 1919 (See: al-Saqqāf 2005: 577; al-Saqqāf 1984: V, 3-6).

2. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Miḥḍār. Born in 1863, al-Miḥḍār studied under eminent scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, Hejaz, and India, before establishing himself in Bondowoso, East Java. Al-Miḥḍār was recognized as one of the leading spiritual leaders of the Bā ʿAlawīs in Java.[118] Al-Miḥḍār's father, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, was the founder of the *ḥawṭa* of al-Quwayra, an autonomous settlement carved out of the territory of the Yāfiʿī Quʿayṭī Sultanate. Al-Miḥḍār's family received the income from the *ḥawṭa* and was exempted from taxes and levies. In Ḥaḍramawt, al-Miḥḍār's family was recognized as the spiritual leader of the Yāfiʿī tribes. Thus when the Yāfiʿīs migrated to Java, they began to revolve around al-Miḥḍār and recognized him as their spiritual leader. Al-Miḥḍār died in Surabaya in 1926 (al-Mashhūr 1984: I, 283; al-Saqqāf 1984: V, 84; Freitag 2003: 163-4).

[118] The index of Arabs — a document consisting of names and short biographies of various Arab individuals based in the Malay Archipelago suspected of harboring anti-British and pan-Islamic sentiments issued by the British Consulate in Batavia in 1919 — describes al-Miḥḍār as follows:

> Resident Bondowese, Java, 25/30 years. Piece-goods merchant but not active. Religious teacher. Age 58. Born al-Goeweri, Hadramaut. Very highly reverenced religious teacher, commanding immense respect. Most imposing presence […] great natural dignity. Head of Alawiyin Wa-ansarihim (IO R/20/A/1409)

Both al-Ḥabashī and al-Miḥḍār were Ḥaddādian *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* who also happened to be scions of Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabates*. With the influx of Ḥaḍramī tribes that historically lived under the spiritual authority of these *manṣabates*, scholars like al-Ḥabashī and al-Miḥḍār began to be regarded as *manṣabs* whose authority stemmed not only from their textual mastery but also from their genealogical descent from the founders of the *ḥawṭas* and the *sulṭa rūhiyya* of their families. It is, in short, an authority that came from an elsewhere and an elsewhen.

In Java, *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* like al-Ḥabashī and al-Miḥḍār became *manṣabs* without *ḥawṭās*. Having no sacred sanctuary did not mean that the *manṣabate* customs of Ḥaḍramawt were not reinvented. For example, when al-ʿAṭṭās went to East Java to visit al-Miḥḍār, the latter organized a reception that resonated with the custom of a Ḥaḍramī *manṣabate*:

> Many times Habib Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Miḥḍār had urged him [al-ʿAṭṭās] to visit the eastern parts [of Java] and Bondowoso. Finally he decided to travel on the month of Rajab 1343/ February 1925 with his family with a special car that was prepared for him. First he went to Surabaya where he was the guest of brother Muḥsin and brother ʿAbd al-Qādir, both the sons of ʿAydarūs b. ʿAqīl. He was personally welcomed in Surabaya by Habib Muḥammad al-Miḥḍār. The welcoming reception was attended by numerous Bā ʿAlawī *sayyids* from Surabaya and its surrounding areas, as well as from Betawi [Jakarta]. Many events were held during his visit. Sermons were delivered and prayers were invoked. He then went to Bondowoso accompanied by Habib Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Miḥḍār and around forty other Bā ʿAlawīs. When he reached the outskirt of Bondowoso he was received by a large welcoming party with drums and raised flags, who then accompanied him from the city limit all the way to the house. He was the guest of Habib Muḥammad for eight days (Shahabuddin 2000: 65).

To welcome a guest on the outskirts of the town is an established Arabian tribal custom observed in places like Ḥaḍramawt. To do so with drums and raised banners, however, was exclusive to either a tribal chief or a *manṣab*. This account thus shows how al-Miḥḍār did not only assume the role of a *shaykh al-taʿlīm*, but also that of a *manṣab*. While theoretically, the Ḥaddādian paradigm champions the constitution of a flattened and duplicable *jamāʿa* through the

propagation of a common theological, ethical, and devotional code, in reality, the *jamāʿas* that were constituted by Ḥaddādian *shaykhs al-taʿlīm* like al-Ḥabashī, al-Miḥḍār, and al-ʿAṭṭās were more akin to the older tribal *jamāʿas* of the *ḥawṭas*.

The *Manṣabate* of Pekalongan

When al-ʿAṭṭās passed away in January 1929, his role as a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* was continued by his youngest son ʿAlī (d. 1412/1992). ʿAlī was personally educated by his father. He was also sent to Ḥaḍramawt to study in the *ribāṭ* (boarding school) of Tarīm, where he stayed for almost a decade. Upon returning to Pekalongan, ʿAlī stayed with his father, assisting him in teaching and leading various rituals. With ʿAlī's ascendancy to his father's position, succession became hereditary, and al-ʿAṭṭās' Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* became more recognizable as a *manṣabate*. To begin with, the Ḥaḍramī composition of the *jamāʿa* already imbued it with tribal characteristics. Al-ʿAṭṭās himself was recognized as a *manṣab,* albeit without a *ḥawṭa*. These two factors, however, were not enough to ensure the emergence and maintenance of a *manṣabate* particularly after al-ʿAṭṭās' death. In what follows, I discuss four factors that enabled this reconfiguration.

1. Nomination and Formal Investiture

For one to become a recognized *manṣab*, one has to be formally invested with that role. In the *ḥawṭās* of Ḥaḍramawt, this ceremony takes place at the tomb of the *ḥawṭa*'s founder. The new *manṣab* utters an oath to continue performing the roles of the *ḥawṭa*'s founder in front of senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars, other *manṣabs*, and tribal chiefs. He is then invested with the robe, turban, or shawl of the *ḥawṭa*'s founder. When al-ʿAṭṭās passed away, senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars came from all over Java to attend the funeral. While no one alive today witnessed the event, senior members of the Ḥaḍramī community of Pekalongan I talked to, explained that the initiation took place

moments before al-ʿAṭṭās body was buried. The scholars took ʿAlī's hand and made him vow to continue the works of his father. ʿAlī was henceforth recognized as an *al-qāʾim bi-l-maqām, "*the one who stands in the station" of his father, although he was commonly referred to by his fellow Ḥaḍramīs as a *manṣab*. In the view of his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, ʿAlī's position as a *manṣab* was further strengthened by his marriage to the daughter of Muḥammad al-Miḥḍār, who as discussed above was a prominent *manṣab,* thereby conjoining two saintly houses. Upon taking on the role, ʿAlī also wrote to other senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Java and Ḥaḍramawt to request their blessings.

Figure 4.8: ʿAlī and his son Aḥmad, the first and second *manṣab* of Pekalongan

Towards the end of his life, ʿAlī delegated his leadership role to his eldest son, Aḥmad, who also graduated from the *ribāṭ* of Tarīm (figure 4.8). When ʿAlī passed away in 1992, senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars and other *manṣabs* formally invested Aḥmad to take over his father's role. Aḥmad assumed the role for less than a decade. He passed away in 1999 and his eldest son Abdullah Bagir, who studied in Mecca, was formally invested during the funeral. Bagir remains the *manṣab* down to the present day (figure 4.9). Nomination by a previous *manṣab* and formal investiture from other Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *manṣabs* are crucial mechanisms of succession.

Figure 4:9: Abdullah Bagir, the third and current *manṣab* of Pekalongan

In Ḥaḍramawt, one of the visible marks of a *manṣab*'s authority is his possession of material objects associated with the *ḥawṭa*'s founder, which may include prayer caps and beads, walking stick, shawl, turban, or ring. Upon request, a *manṣab* would usually allow visitors to wear or touch these objects for blessings (*tabarruk*). Objects associated with saints or the pious are believed to transmit the benediction of deceased. During the commemoration of the saint, a *manṣab* would wear or carry these objects as visible signs of authority. In Pekalongan, the *manṣab* also safeguards several objects associated with al-ʿAṭṭās, including his shawl (worn by ʿAlī in figure 4.8), turban, and books.[119] Another heirloom safeguarded by the *manṣab* is an early twentieth century lithographic *mawlid* text that al-ʿAṭṭās used to recite from when he led the *mawlid*.[120] Finally, the *manṣab* also safeguards a Ḥaḍramī-made carpet that was used to cover the place where al-ʿAṭṭās used to teach (see: figure 4.10).[121] Material objects associated with al-ʿAṭṭās and believed to carry his blessings, thus function to project historical continuity and reinforce the authority and legitimacy of a *manṣab.* At the same time, the scarcity of such material objects limits competition and factionalism.

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[119] During the *ḥawl* or other important religious holidays, the *manṣab* wears the shawl. He also lends the shawl to his close associates to be worn for their weddings

[120] Today, the text is only used during the annual commemoration of al-ʿAṭṭās. Following the commemoration at al-ʿAṭṭās' mausoleum, people congregate at al-ʿAṭṭās' house to recite the *mawlid*. The *manṣab* asks senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars to recite the *mawlid* from that particular book.

[121] Today the old carpet is no longer used except twice a year during the ʿĪd al-fiṭr and ʿĪd al-aḍḥā, when it is brought out to cover the mosque

Figure 4.10: The current manṣab of Pekalongan leading the recitation of the *mawlid* on the afternoon of ʿĪd al-fiṭr. For the occasion, the mosque is covered by an old carpet used in al-ʿAṭṭās' days.

2. Spatialization of Authority and Hierarchy

In Ḥaḍramawt, the territory in which the *manṣab*'s authority reigned — known as the *ḥawṭa* — was clearly delineated. While in Java, a *manṣab* does not reign over a territory, this does not mean that his authority is not spatially inscribed. Al-ʿAṭṭās chose to serve as the imam of the old Arab Quarter mosque and did not build his own mosque. While he undertook the mosque's renovation project, he was not the legal proprietor of that mosque. The mosque belonged to another Ḥaḍramī family and as such, al-ʿAṭṭās had to legally abide by the regulations laid down by the mosque's founder in the endowment deed. In 1933, his son ʿAlī built a new annex to the front reception room of his father's house and turned it into a mosque, the Masjid al-Rawḍa. In his own mosque, ʿAlī led daily prayers and recitation of the *rātib,* the weekly *mawlid,* and the annual recitation of the Bukhārī compilation of *ḥadīth*. Ever since, Masjid al-Rawḍa has served as the spatial site of the *manṣabate*. It is where the *manṣab* lives, receives guests, as well as where he continues to assemble his *jamāʿa*.

Authority and hierarchy are physically articulated in the built environment of the mosque. A dais (*amben*), built in one corner of the reception space, is reserved for the *manṣab,* his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, and other distinguished guests, when a gathering is in session (figure 4.12). The wall facing the entrance is decorated by several framed calligraphic texts presenting al-ʿAṭṭas' religious authorities. Among them is al-ʿAṭṭās' genealogical tree (*nasab*) connecting him to the Prophet. Next to it is a chain of Sufi initiation (*silsila*) connecting him to his scholarly predecessors. Adjoining the two charts is a panegyric verse praising al-ʿAṭṭās. Finally, there is a poem composed by al-Ḥusayn, the Prophet's grandson, extolling the virtues of the Prophet's

family. During a ritual, or when receiving guests, the *manṣab* sits against the wall facing his audience and behind him are these authority-projecting texts.

While Masjid al-Rawḍa is basically an annex to al-ʿAṭṭās' house, there remains a clear boundary separating the residential area where the *manṣab* and his family live, and the mosque/reception room, where the *jamāʿa* assembles. Only family members, domestic helpers and the *manṣab's* close acquaintances are permitted to enter the residential area from the double door that connects the mosque to the house. During big gatherings like the celebration for the completion of the Bukhārī recitation, the *manṣab* provides food for the *jamāʿa.* The food for the Bā ʿAlawīs is served in the residential area, whilst for others, it is served in the mosque/reception area. The mosque therefore physically maintains both a clear separation between family and *jamāʿa,* and a stratification of the *jamāʿa* into Bā ʿAlawī and non-Bā ʿAlawī segments.

Figure 4.11: The exterior of Masjid al-Rawḍa

Figure 4.12: The interior of Masjid al-Rawḍa

The *manṣab*'s authority is also instantiated on a weekly basis at the main congregational mosque (*masjid jamik*) of Pekalongan, where most inner city residents perform the Friday prayer. While the first and the second *manṣabs* did not lead the Friday prayer, there is a special spot inside the mosque reserved for the *manṣab* and his family. Covered with a red Persian rug, the spot is visibly marked as it is the only covered spot inside the marble-floored mosque. The spot is situated at the back of the mosque, adjacent to the main entrance, and from there the *manṣab* can lean on the rear wall of the mosque whilst sitting. Unlike his predecessors, ʿAbdallāh Bagir

leads the Friday prayer and for this role, he has to be at the forefront of the mosque, leaving the reserved spot to his brother and brother-in-law.[122]

Another spatial inscription of the *manṣab*'s authority is al-ʿAṭṭas' mausoleum. Al-ʿAṭṭās was buried in a private land adjoining Pekalongan's main cemetery.[123] Apart from the tombs of al-ʿAṭṭās and his wife, the mausoleum contains the tombs of the first and second *manṣabs* and their wives. Every Friday morning, the *manṣab* visits the mausoleum with his family and *jamāʿa* and leads the recitation of the Qurʾān. A poem dating the mausoleum's construction, written by the Ḥaḍramī jurist Muḥammad b. ʿAwaḍ Bā Faḍl, is framed and hung on the wall inside the *qubba* (domed mausoleum).[124] The poem projects al-ʿAṭṭās' authority, while declaring the site's sanctity:

> O luminous *qubba*, worthy of praise
> Thou contain the grave of the pious one,
> Whose similitude no eyes have ever witnessed
> Truly he was the best in austerity and piety,
> Who has traversed the best life story.
> He, the son of Ṭālib al-ʿAṭṭās, a pure and clean soul
> Aḥmad, the reviver of the *sunna,* a real treasure
> Say to those who visit this tomb: You are the best flock.
> I relate [the date] and praise a beloved: *whose qubba truly shines* [=1348].
> Nearby is a mosque, whose virtue *overflows abundantly* [=1348].

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[122] Based on my weekly observation of this special spot over the course of my fieldwork, it seems that the Friday *jamāʿa* of the congregational mosque know exactly that the spot is reserved for the *manṣab's* family. I have never seen anyone other than the *manṣab*'s immediate family occupy that spot even when it is vacant prior to the arrival of the *manṣab*'s family.

[123] The land was given to ʿAlī as an endowment by Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr al-Shahāb (d. 1359/1941), the head of the wealthy entrepreneurial al-Shahāb family discussed in chapter 2. Al-Shahāb also provided ʿAlī with the money to built a mausoleum over the grave and a small mosque next to it (Shahabuddin 2000: 66).

[124] Chronogram, or dating with poetry is a well-known tradition in both Arabic and Javanese literature. This is enabled by the fact that in the Arabic language every letter of the alphabet has a numerical value. Thus in a chronogram, usually the last line of the poem is written such that when the numerical values of each letter are added, the result will be the year. In the poem above, the year is not located in the final sentence. The poet, however, hints at the line where the date is to be found by saying 'I relate and praise a beloved, Whose qubba truly shines'. Thus the addition of the numerical values of all the characters that form the sentence 'whose qubba truly shines' gives the year 1348/1929. The same procedure can be applied to date the adjacent mosque, the date being found in the phrase 'overflows abundantly'.

Felicitous are those who visit it,
to honor the rising light from the beam of the aiding sun,
Allāh's blessings upon him and his family, the best of all lineages

Beneath the poem is a chronographic phrase that also dates the mausoleum construction. The phrase simply states: "and it is a piece of Ḥurayḍa" (*wa hiya qiṭʿa min ḥurayḍa*), referring to the *ḥawṭa* and founded by the eponym of the al-ʿAṭṭās family, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (see chapter 1). Identifying al-ʿAṭṭās' mausoleum as a piece of Ḥurayḍā means positing it as a Javanese satellite of the *ḥawṭa* of Ḥurayḍa, a form of toponomic duplication that characterized cosmopolitan practice, whereby some centers are infinitely reproducible across distant space (Pollock 2002: 27). While the *manṣab* of Pekalongan does not rule over a *ḥawṭa* or a sovereign territory, the configuration of his *jamāʿa* and the form of authority that it articulates is nevertheless aligned to an elsewhere and an elsewhen; to a particular Islamic social formation — the *ḥawṭa* — against which it modeled itself on, however imperfect, stunted, or travestied.

3. The *Ḥawl:* Performance of Authority

As discussed in chapter 1, organizing and leading an annual *ziyāra* or *ḥawl* (pilgrimage/ commemoration) of the *ḥawṭa*'s founder is among the principal roles of the *manṣabs,* who used the festivity to negotiate peace settlements between warring tribes and facilitate market. In Java, the first Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawl* was instituted at the turn of the twentieth century by the aforementioned *manṣab* Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs al-Ḥabashī in Tegal, Central Java, following the death of a visiting Bā ʿAlawī *shaykh al-taʿlīm,* Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād (d. 1316/1899) (al-ʿAṭṭās

1979: II, 340).[125] Al-Ḥabashī built a mausoleum over al-Ḥaddād's grave and instituted an annual commemoration on the fifteenth of Shaʿbān. He invited fellow Bā ʿAlawī scholars and members of various Ḥaḍramī tribes. Similarly, following al-ʿAṭṭās death, ʿAlī instituted the *ḥawl* in honor of his father. He strategically chose the fourteenth of Shaʿbān as the date for the commemoration to make sure that Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *manṣabs* from all over Java who were already in the habit of making the trip to the *ḥawl* in Tegal could participate. After all, the distance between Pekalongan and Tegal is only 66 km.

The *ḥawl* is a ritual performance that reproduces the *manṣabate* as a socio-discursive formation. Few weeks before the event, the *manṣab* receives gifts and votive offerings from members of his *jamāʿa,* including money, goats, rice, fruits, and vegetables that are then used to prepare the feast for the guests. During the two day event, the *manṣab* meets and greets other Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabs* and scholars who usually arrive in Pekalongan with members of their *jamāʿas* and other non-Bā ʿAlawī scholars. In return, when those *manṣabs* organize the *ḥawl* of their saintly predecessors, the *manṣab* of Pekalongan attends, bringing along members of his *jamāʿa*. The maintenance of ties between *manṣabs* — which in some cases are further cemented by intermarriages — helps to ensure that each Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawl* is well-attended. The *ḥawl* thus momentarily expands the *jamāʿa* of the *manṣab* of Pekalongan by bringing flow of people —

[125] It should be noted that annual pilgrimages to the tomb of Muslim saints and scholars has a long established historical precedent among Indonesian Muslims. The annual rituals held at the tomb of the Shaṭṭarī Shaykh Burhanuddin in Ulakan, West Sumatra and at the tomb of Sunan Gunung Jati in Cirebon, West Java — to name a few — are examples of long established public commemoration (van Ronkel 1914; Muhaimin 2006). It remains unclear however, if they were described as a *ḥawl* or whether they even had the same ritual structures as the contemporary non-Bā ʿAlawī *hawls* that are usually organized to commemorate the founder of a particular *pesantren*. It is perhaps safer to position the Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* that emerged in the early twentieth century as a practice imported from the *ḥawṭas* of Ḥaḍramawt by *shaykh al-taʿlīms* who also happened to come from a *manṣabate* family like al-Ḥabashī. These rituals gradually attracted the participation of the broader Muslim population precisely because they fit into a ritual pattern that has long been recognized by local Muslim population.

some of whom are important scholars — as well as economic and other material goods, before it contracts again at the conclusion of the event.

No ritual or practice instantiates the *manṣab*'s authority more than the *madkhal* or the *manṣab*'s ritualized entry into al-ʿAṭṭās' mausoleum. During the day of the *ḥawl,* thousands of pilgrims flock the area surrounding al-ʿAṭṭās' mausoleum. The mausoleum's door, however, is kept locked, and is only opened upon the arrival of the *manṣab*. The *manṣab* and his entourage — consisting of other Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabs* and senior scholars — arrive at the site heralded by drums, banners, and singing of praises to the Prophet. The *madkhal* is a long established practice in the *ḥawṭas* of Ḥaḍramawt, where it functioned as a formal entry of the Bā ʿAlawīs to the tribal territories where the *ḥawṭa* is located. To do that, they had to wait at the outskirt of the territory and request permission to proceed from the tribal chief, who reigned over the territory. The chief then came and welcomed the entourage. Together they walked in a ritualized procession into the *ḥawṭa* (al-ʿAṭṭās 1979: II, 732-40). In Java, however, the *madkhal* is only a ceremony that projects the *manṣab's* authority and marks the commencement of the *ḥawl*.

The *ḥawl* is therefore a public performance of the *manṣab*'s authority that hinges on connection with the past as it is founded on his legitimacy as the successor of the saint. People come to Pekalongan to commemorate a saint who lived in the early twentieth century and not the *manṣab.* Yet the *manṣab* is genealogically linked to the saint. He wears the shawl of the saint, leads the procession, and opens the door to the mausoleum. His genealogical connection to the saint enables him to exercise his authority during the commemoration. He is a lineal connector between his saintly great-grandfather and the *jamāʿa*. The *mansab*'s authority also hinges on connection with an elsewhere, that is, on the networks that tie him to other *manṣabs* and scholars

from different localities. Such networks ensure the *ḥawl* is well attended.[126] The *ḥawl,* however, should not be seen merely as benefitting from these networks. As a site that cements horizontal solidarity while reinforcing hierarchy, the *ḥawl* extends, strengthens, and consolidates these networks.[127]

As the biggest Islamic gathering in Pekalongan, the *ḥawl* reinforces the *manṣab'*s position in his own hometown. His ability to draw people — especially other scholars — to Pekalongan benefits local businesses. It also attests to the wide recognition of his authority to the people of Pekalongan, who consequently have to take him seriously.[128] It is primarily the *manṣab*'s ability to stage the large annual gathering that draws people from elsewhere into the city, that makes him to become recognized as a preeminent religious authority in Pekalongan, and not just as the spiritual leader of the Ḥaḍramīs.

4. *Sunnat al-Salaf*: Objectification of the *Jamāʿa*

Generally speaking, the role of the *manṣab* can be divided into two. First, he serves members of his *jamāʿa* by presiding over weddings and funerals, visiting the sick, entertaining guests, and issuing religious counsels upon request. He also extends his hospitality to visitors from Ḥaḍramawt, the Hejaz, and other parts of Indonesia. Similar to a parish priest who provides

[126] My discussion with pilgrims illustrates how they become aware of the *ḥawl*. Many related that, usually a month before the *ḥawl*, an oral invitation would be read during Friday prayer in their village. Some reported how their local *kyais* (Javanese Muslim scholar) told them about the *ḥawl* during their weekly study groups (*majelis taklim*). Senior scholars with large *jamāʿas* usually receive telephone invitations from the *manṣab,* and they bring a bus or two of their *jamāʿas* to attend the *ḥawl*.

[127] Many attendees I conversed with explained that the *ḥawl* enables them to interact with Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *kyais*. For instance, a pilgrim from Bandung in West Java is able to meet a Bā ʿAlawī *manṣab* from Pasuruan and a Javanese *kyai* from Solo who attends the *ḥawl* with the Bā ʿAlawī *manṣab* of Solo. For further discussion see: Alatas 2014

[128] Thus the city's mayor personally delivers a welcoming speech at every *ḥawl*. The city council also lists al-ʿAṭṭās' mausoleum as one of the city's cultural heritage on its website. Every time a new mayor, police chief, or army commander is elected or appointed, they would visit and introduce themselves to the reigning *manṣab* to ask for his blessings.

pastoral care to the congregation, such a role requires constant maintenance of temporally and spatially situated relations that are subject to various contingencies and vicissitudes. One can say that in this role, he remains a connector who attempts to link the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Secondly, the task of the *manṣab* is to continue the practices instituted by the saint and maintain ritual regularity. He leads the recitation of the daily *rātib,* the weekly *mawlid,* and the annual recitation of the Bukhārī *ḥadīth* just as the saint did, without modifying them to suit the changing make up of his *jamāʿa.* The *manṣab* still leads the annual ʿĪd al-fiṭr and ʿĪd al-aḍḥā prayers at the Arab Quarter mosque and recites the Ibn Nubāta's sermon. All of the ritual practices he leads are conducted in Arabic, even when almost all members of the *jamāʿa* are no longer Arabic literate.[129]

Maintaining discursive and ritual regularity involves a set of processes that can be referred to as *objectification* (Mitchell 1988; Keane 2007). Objectification entails "abstraction of that which was concrete," "decontextualization of that which lives within a context of social relations," and "alienation of persons from the results of their activity" (Keane 2007: 10).[130] Let me illustrate this by reiterating the point that al-ʿAṭṭās was fundamentally a *shaykh al-taʿlīm.* He constituted a historically situated *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* by articulating the *sunna* to his fellow

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[129] An octogenarian I met during my fieldwork even told me that the food offered by the *manṣab* during important religious holiday celebrations has remained the same, and the taste is consistent with what he savored in his childhood. I have heard similar recollection from other people. Physical contact with objects from the past — including the rug on which the saint used to sit and food recipe that enables the recreation of historical food — project a continuity to the past that can be experienced by the *jamāʿa*.

[130] As noted by Keane (2007), the concept of *objectification* involves processes that have been conceptualized by social scientists under different headings including *abstraction*, *decentering*, *decontextualization*, *reification*, and *disembedding*. While the notion of objectification has been generally seen only in its negative consequences, that of disembedding life from its previous unity, thereby subjecting it to estrangement, Keane's work pushes us to think about multiple modalities of objectification in order to critique the prevalent positioning of objectification as an hallmark of modernity. For instance, objectification — in the form of entextualization — allows for the movement of language and the possibility of cultural circulation. Religion, of course, circulate by means of scripture, sermons, prayers, creeds, etc all of which are forms of entextualized and hence objectified language. When thinking about objectification one ought to understand the semiotic ideology that inform such process.

Ḥaḍramīs who lived in the Arab quarter and, due to Dutch colonial policy, were segregated from the wider Javanese population. He cultivated his *jamāʿa* by transmitting texts and organizing gatherings to articulate Prophetic *sunna*. The *manṣab*, in contrast, does not introduce new texts or gatherings. His role is centered on reproducing the particular configuration of *jamāʿa* introduced by al-ʿAṭṭās while making sure it is not significantly altered. For al-ʿAṭṭās, gatherings, rituals, and the specific forms they took were means to articulate and transmit the Prophetic *sunna*. For the *manṣab*, however, those gatherings and their specificities are precisely what need to be maintained even if they are no longer effective as means of articulating the *sunna.* In doing so, the *manṣab* detaches the texts, gatherings, and rituals from the contingent social relations that initially generated them. What once were simply modes of mediating and articulating the Prophetic *sunna* subsequently became objectified and maintained as part of the *sunna*.

One example of this process is the recitation of the Bukhārī compilation of Prophetic *ḥadīth,* performed annually at Masjid al-Rawḍa in the month of Rajab. Every day the *manṣab* and his *jamāʿa* recite the text for several hours in the morning and the afternoon. The attendees carry their own copies of the text and they take turns in reciting the *ḥadīths*. The *manṣab* himself listens attentively and corrects mistakes in recitation. Usually they complete the recitation of the 2601 *ḥadīths* that make up the compilation in two weeks, and the *manṣab* hosts a big celebration. Taken during the celebration, figure 4.13 shows how the *jamāʿa* congregates and revolves around the figure of the *manṣab.* They sit facing the *manṣab* whose authority is expressed, among others, through the copies of the Bukhārī text stacked in front of him. The gradation of the concentric circles is hierarchically organized. Those forming the closest circle to the *manṣab* are his male family members, followed by other Bā ʿAlawīs in the second circle, and the rest of

the male *jamāʿa* in subsequent circlers. Female members of the *manṣab*'s family and *jamāʿa* sit in the residential area of the Masjid al-Rawḍa.

Figure 4.13: The current *manṣab* of Pekalongan leading the Bukhārī recitation.

The practice of reciting the Bukhārī compilation in Rajab was introduced by al-ʿAṭṭās as a way to familiarize his *jamāʿa* with the Prophetic *sunna*. Today, however, it has become no more than a ritualized recitation. The whole nine volumes of the compilation are recited very quickly and the *manṣab* does not translate or elucidate the recited *ḥadīths*. As a result, the attendees are usually Bā ʿAlawī elders and Javanese graduates of *pesantren* who are literate in Arabic. Most Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan do not bother to attend the daily reading and choose to

only attend the concluding celebration. Many expressed to me that they no longer see the point of attending as they do not understand Arabic. The insistence on conducting the recitation in Arabic may indeed have the effect of splitting up or contracting the *jamāʿa*. Still there are those who still regularly attend the sessions even if they are not literate in Arabic. When I asked them the reason for doing so, they explained to me that they are mainly there for the *baraka*, or blessings, of reciting the *ḥadīth*. What we see in this particular case is precisely the objectification of a practice initially established to transmit the *sunna* to a *jamāʿa* comprised of Ḥaḍramī migrants into a ritual that needs to be maintained in its original form even when it no longer effectively serves the purpose.

The same criticism was raised by many Bā ʿAlawīs I conversed with regarding the *manṣab*'s recitation of al-Ḥaddād *al-Naṣāʾiḥ al-Dīniyya* (The Religious Counsels) during the month of Ramaḍān. One person impatiently asked me, "why couldn't he just translate the text he is reading into Indonesian so that we can all benefit from it?". Another person who is committed to maintaining the established practice, explained to me that keeping everything in Arabic can actually motivate people to learn Arabic. Most Bā ʿAlawīs in Pekalongan, however, are no longer interested in attending such sessions due to the language barrier. They only attend gatherings of the *manṣab* on special occasions like important Islamic holidays, and primarily for devotional reasons. In regards to actually learning about the *sunna*, most have resorted to other means like reading translations of Islamic texts published and distributed by the bourgeoning Islamic publishing industry or watching Islamic programs on television and youtube.

When I asked the current *manṣab* about his reluctance to introduce new innovations to the ways practices are conducted, he responded that they are the *sunnat al-salaf*, the *sunna* of the

predecessors. To introduce significant modification could incur the anger of the Bā ʿAlawī elders. For example, during the 2012 ʿĪd al-fiṭr prayer, the *manṣab* began the prayer at 7:15am, five minutes earlier than when it was regularly performed. Upon the completion of the prayer, the *manṣab*'s maternal uncle came up to him angrily and told him that he had introduced an innovation to the *sunnat al-salaf*. Practices instituted by al-ʿAṭṭās were therefore objectified and detached from the concrete relations that made them to the extent that the *manṣab* himself, who technically is the leader of the *jamāʿa,* is bound by them.

The *Jamʿiyya* and a divided *Jamāʿa*

Thus far I have argued that the *jamāʿa* that was initially assembled by al-ʿAṭṭās can be characterized as a Ḥaḍramī Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa,* which underwent a gradual reconfiguration into a *manṣabate*. The picture I have sketched above presents an orderly formation of an Islamic social assemblage that revolves around the authority of a saintly *shaykh al-taʿlīm* — and subsequently a *manṣab* — devoid of conflicts and contestations. This was by no means the case. New technologies developed in the late nineteenth century, such as print, telegraph, and steam travel, facilitated new social and intellectual entanglements for Muslims in Southeast Asia. One result of these developments was the dissemination of modern Islamic reformism — that began to emerge in the urban centers of Egypt and the Levantine and was borne out of the interaction between Muslim scholars and European modernity — into Southeast Asia (Feener 2010; Laffan 2003).

Challenging the epistemological basis of traditional Islamic thought and practice, modern Muslim reformists argued for bypassing the authority of established scholars and their codifications of the *sunna,* including the simplified creed, the legal *mukhṭaṣar*, and the *rātib*. In contrast, they argued for the need for Muslims to directly access and reinterpret the Qurʾān and

the collected *ḥadīths* in light of modern developments in the natural and social sciences. One semiotic form used to transmit this new codification of the *sunna* were periodicals, which as Michael Warner has argued, "allow participants in its discourse to understand themselves as directly and actively belonging to a social entity that exist historically in secular time and has consciousness of itself, though it has no existence apart from the activity of its own discursive circulation" (Warner 2005: 105). In other words, periodicals allowed for the creation of a public consisting of readers from different places throughout the Muslim World. The Ḥaḍramīs in Java began to organize their own Arabic-language newspapers, creating an Arabic reading public through their circulations, fueling a Java-wide Arabic collective imagination (Mandal 2002: 163-184), while simultaneously excluding the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis,* many of whom were no longer literate in Arabic.

One institution that attempted to materialize the new reading public into a *jamāʿa* was the *jamʿiyya*, or modern association. Inspired by the developments of modern European clubs and voluntary associations, the Ḥaḍramī entrepreneurial elites of Batavia (Jakarta) established the *Jamʿiyyat al-Khayr* (The Benevolent Association) in 1901.[131] In 1919 they established a modern Arabic-based school under the same name (Mobini-Kesheh 1999: 36-7). While *Salafiyya*, the school that al-ʿAṭṭās founded in Pekalongan, was strictly grounded on the Ḥaddādian curriculum and was modeled on the *ribāṭ* (boarding school) of Ḥaḍramawt, the curriculum of the *Jamʿiyyat*

[131] The *Jamʿiyyat al-Khayr* was also inspired by the modernizing currents among the Chinese diasporic community of the Dutch East Indies. Following Japan's victory in the 1899 Ruso-Japanese War, the Dutch colonial authority granted a new legal status to the Japanese living in the Dutch East Indies, equating them to the Europeans. Attempting to follow Japan's successful transition to modernity, in 1900 several Dutch-educated Chinese in the East Indies founded a modern Mandarin-based school, the *Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan* (THHK)*,* to revive Confucianism and strengthen modern Chinese identity among the Chinese diaspora (Suryadinata 1997: 80-2).

al-Khayr school combined traditional religious subjects with natural sciences and languages.[132] The school was designed to produce intellectuals and not *shaykh al-taʿlīms*. It materialized new knowledge structures — based on a modern understanding of rationality — which attempted to move people from parochial ties to a common standard of practice and ethics susceptible to the new modern urban sociality. The curriculum was geared towards producing modern subjects who would be able to partake in modern social formations like the *jamʿiyya*. The success of the *Jamʿiyya Khayr* school in Batavia led to the emergence of similar Arabic schools in other parts of Java including Pekalongan (*Shamāʾil al-Huda*), Solo (*Jamʿiyya al-ʿArabiyya al-Islāmiyya*), and Surabaya (*Jamʿiyya al-Khayriyya*) (Ibid: 37).

One important consequence of this modernizing current within the Ḥaḍramī diaspora in Java was the strengthening of critical attitudes, especially among the wealthy non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs towards Bā ʿAlawī dominance. Such sentiments had been building up, although they lacked an articulative framework. Modern ideas of egalitarianism, propounded by modern Muslim reformists like Muḥammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905) and Muḥammad Rasḥid Ridhā (d. 1935) as part of their articulation of the Prophetic *sunna*, finally provided them with such a framework. In 1915, several Ḥaḍramī modernists established Jamʿiyyat al-Iṣlāḥ wa al-Irshād al-ʿArabiyya (The

[132] Natalie Mobini-Kesheh describes the curriculum of this school:

> Whereas traditional Islamic schools were characterized by exclusively Islamic curricula and a teaching style based on rote-learning of the *Qur'an* and other Islamic texts, the Jam'iyyah Khayr schools introduced a modern structure and curriculum. The students were divided into graded classes, sat at desks, and used modern textbooks with illustrations (taboo in traditional Islamic schools). They studies arithmetic, geography, Islamic history, and English language, along with Arabic and more traditional Islamic subjects. The underlying philosophy of the schools emphasized the importance of understanding, Arabic language being viewed as the means by which students would be able to read and comprehend the Scriptures for themselves. Apart from formal classes, informal discussions or *majlis* were conducted in which problems of the reform of Islam were discussed, based on articles from the Middle Eastern press including the Egyptian publication *Al-Manār (*1999: 37).

Arab Association for Reform and Guidance), better known as al-Irshād.[133] The *jamʿiyya* called for progressive educational reforms, social equality for all Muslims as well as a return to what they perceived as the pristine *sunna* (Mobini-Kesheh 1999). While there were many Bā ʿAlawīs who initially supported al-Irshād's agenda, the *jamʿiyya*'s insistence on social equality and their demand for the eradication of practices deemed as superstitions (*khurāfāt*) and heretical innovations (*bidaʿ*) — including grave visitations and venerations of saints — drove many of them away. Among the primary objects of Irshādī criticism were institutions and practices associated with the *manṣabate,* particularly the *ṣulṭa rūḥiyya* (spiritual power) of the *manṣabs*. What was once posited as a particular figuration of a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa,* became increasingly seen as *bidaʿ*, betraying a significant shift in the way the *sunna* was coming to be understood. Such criticisms enraged senior Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *manṣabs* (Knysh 1997; Mobini-Kesheh 1999), leading to high-profile public polemics and intense clashes between the Irshādīs and the Bā ʿAlawīs that torn the Ḥaḍramī *jamāʿa*.

While I have not found sources that point to how al-ʿAṭṭās personally responded to this rift, there are sources pointing to the reaction of his colleague and fellow *manṣab* (and the father-in-law of his son ʿAlī) Muḥammad al-Miḥḍār. Al-Miḥḍar actively dissuaded non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs from joining al-Irshād. He wrote letters to the Yāfiʿīs of Bumiayu, Central Java, warning them that joining al-Irshād "would cut their ties to the Prophet's family" (al-Bakrī 1936: II, 324).[134] Al-Miḥḍār discouraged the Yāfiʿī elders from accommodating a preacher from Tegal who was visiting Bumiayu to propagate Irshādī ideology to the Yāfiʿīs. According to the Yāfiʿī

[133] For works on the emergence and early development of al-Irsyad, see: Freitag 2003; Knysh 1997; Mobini-Kesheh 1997; Mobini-Kesheh 1999.

[134] Remember that the Yāfiʿīs were under the *ṣulta rūhiyya* (spiritual power) of the al-Miḥḍār family, and thus, as their *manṣab*, he assumed that they would follow his command.

historian and Irshādī ideologue Ṣalāḥ al-Bakrī, upon receiving the letter, the Yāfiʿī elders laughed and ridiculed al-Miḥḍār (*Ibid*: II, 325). The *manṣab*'s *ṣulta rūhiyya* was no longer deemed to be sacrosanct by the group that was formerly under its influence.

Al-Miḥḍār also wrote several letters to the Quʿayṭī ruler of Ḥaḍramawt and his vizier, requesting them to interdict the spread of the Irshādī ideology in Ḥaḍramawt (al-Bakrī 1936: II, 324). While the Sultan followed the request by banning the *jamʿiyya* from his dominion, the spread of the Irshādī ideology could not be easily thwarted.[135] Al-Miḥḍār's aggressive stance against the Irshādīs — which in all likelihood represented the position of his fellow *manṣabs* — was pivotal both in uniting the Bā ʿAlawīs in Java and intensifying the conflict with the increasingly radical and anti-Bā ʿAlawī Irshādīs. Two years after al-Miḥḍār's death in 1926, the Bā ʿAlawīs, founded their own exclusive *jamʿiyya*, the Rābiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya.[136]

Although the Irshādī-Bā ʿAlawī conflict concerned the Ḥaḍramīs in the Dutch East Indies, it nevertheless reflected a broader trend that was happening throughout the Muslim world at the turn of the twentieth century (Sirriyeh 1999). The internal Ḥaḍramī conflict, for instance, mirrored the quarrels that erupted between Indonesian Muslim modernists and the so-called traditionalists (for the later, see chapter 2). In 1912, two years before the founding of al-Irshād, a Javanese scholar from Yogyakarta educated in Mecca and influenced by Egyptian Muslim

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[135] During her visit to the ḥawṭa of Ḥurayḍa, the English traveler Freya Stark noted how

> in the old days, before the young men of Java had weaned the hearts of the beduin from the Sayyids of Hureidha, a vast crowd used to pout in from the neighbouring wadis on this last day of the feast. But now it is only a poor little contingent (1942: 130).

[136] Ever since its inception, the Rābiṭa has been active on two fronts: safeguarding and recording Bā ʿAlawī genealogies and providing financial assistance and scholarships to Bā ʿAlawīs in need. To accomplish the first task, the organization founded a genealogical office known as the Maktab al-Daimi. The Maktab preserves and compiles genealogical records of the Bā ʿAlawīs. It also authenticates Bā ʿAlawī genealogies and issues genealogical booklets. To date, the Rābiṭa has thirty-five branches throughout Indonesia. Its source of funding comes from the endowments and donations of wealthy Bā ʿAlawīs.

reformers, by the name of Ahmad Dahlan (Aḥmad Dahlān), founded a modern *jamʿiyya*, the Muhammadiyah. Central to al-Irshād and Muhammadiyah was the project of purifying Islamic practices from what were seen as *bidaʿ*, specifically understood as religious practices that have no precedents in the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth*.[137] Responding to the expansion of modern Islamic reformism, in 1926 — two years before the founding of the Rābiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya — traditionalist Javanese scholars founded their own *jamʿiyya,* the Nahdlatul ʻUlama (NU).[138] NU's traditionalism shares similarities with, and has been influenced by the Ḥaddādian paradigm as discussed in chapter 2. For this reason, as a general trend, the Bā ʿAlawīs tend to affiliate with NU even when they are not formal members, while Irshādīs tend to associate themselves with Muhammadiyah (Jacobsen 2009: 52).

The *Manṣabate* at a Crossroads

The modernizing currents among the Muslims of Java led to the constriction of the *jamāʿa* that made up the *manṣabate*. In the course of the Bā ʿAlawī-Irshādī conflict, most non-Bā ʿAlawī members of al-ʿAṭṭās *jamāʿa* — including those from the Nahd and the Jaʿda tribes — disassociated themselves from the congregation and joined al-Irshād. Some even began to criticize al-ʿAṭṭās and his successors openly, using reformist ideas to question their authority. While most of the Bā ʿAlawīs remained respectful of the *manṣabate*, they also began to be more

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[137] Both *jamʿiyyas* posited the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* as the only acceptable legitimating reference, and thus a practice cannot be considered as *sunna* if it is not explicitly stated in an authentic *ḥadīth*. Both the Qurʾān and the *ḥadīth* should in turn be subjected to rational interpretation in light of modern challenges and in accordance to modern sciences. Both *jamʿiyyas* were also known for their emphasis on modern education and social work. For more on the Muhammadiyah, see: Nakamura 2012; Federspiel 1970; Peacock 1978; Qodir 2010.

[138] As a *jamʿiyya,* NU has been committed to the preservation of "traditional" Islamic practices including the celebration of the Prophet's birthday (*mawlid*), the commemoration of the death anniversaries of scholars/saints (*ḥawl*), and visitations (*ziyāra*) to their graves. NU scholars are known for their tendency to tolerate local cultural forms, even incorporating them into their religious lives. They follow the teachings and precedents of past scholars rather than resorting to independent reasoning in religious matters. They also emphasize scholastic learning involving the study of classical Arabic texts in Ashʿarite theology, linguistic sciences, Shāfiʿī legal *mukhtaṣārs,* and sufism. For more on NU, see: Bruinessen 1994; Bruinessen 2013b; Barton and Fealy 1996; Bush 2009.

attuned to modern articulations of the *sunna* disseminated through the circulation of Islamic periodicals. After the founding of the Rābiṭa al-ʿAlawiyya, many Bā ʿAlawīs perceived the *jamʿiyya* as their principal institution and took active part in it. The Pekalongan branch of the *jamʿiyya* was founded in 1929 under the leadership of young Bā ʿAlawī intelligentsia educated in modern Arab schools. The *manṣab* only played an advisory role in the *Rābiṭa*.

The second development that led to the constriction of the *manṣab*'s *jamāʿa* was the expansion of Muhammadiyah reform ideas among the wealthy Javanese entrepreneurs of the city. While during al-ʿAṭṭās lifetime, the *jamāʿa* mainly consisted of Ḥaḍramīs, by the time ʿAlī became the *manṣab*, several wealthy Javanese entrepreneurial families began to revolve around him. ʿAlī after all was born in Pekalongan, and unlike his father, he spoke Indonesian and both high and low Javanese, thereby enabling him to effectively communicate with non-Ḥaḍramīs. This however did not last long, for in 1946, a West Sumatran Muhammadiyah activist by the name of Abdul Gaffar Ismail (d. 1998) was exiled to Pekalongan.[139] Ismail settled in a house less than a block from Masjid al-Rawḍa and organized a weekly gathering there. In this gathering, Ismail did not read from a particular Islamic text, nor did he perform any devotional service. The gathering simply consisted of his personal orations, delivered in plain and eloquent Indonesian. He actively criticized traditionalist Islamic practices that have no grounding in the *sunna*, including those frequently performed at Masjid al-Rawḍa. One of my interlocutors recalled how in the early 1960s, Ismail used to chide the *manṣab* for his political quietism, saying:

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[139] Abdul Ghaffar Ismail was the father of one of the leading modern Indonesian poets Taufiq Ismail. Born in 1911, Ismail was educated in the Sumatra Thawalib, the most influential reformist school in Sumatra led by the charismatic Abdul Karim Amrullah (d. 1945), also known as Hadji Rasul. Hadji Rasul subsequently became one of the main propagandists of the Muhammadiyah. See: Abdullah 1971; Noer 1973.

> They say he is the grandson of the Prophet… they say he is the grandson of ʿAlī… Do you know who ʿAlī was? ʿAlī was the bravest hero. He was a war commander. He singlehandedly carried the gate of Khaybār during the siege. And yet, how come his offspring is so afraid of the government, and never uttered a word against the various injustices towards the Muslims? How come he never said a word about the PKI [Indonesian Communist Party]?

Ismail's talks reverberated using an amplification system, enabling people in the neighborhood to hear, including the *manṣab* who lived a few houses down the road. Gradually, more and more people attended his weekly gathering. The strong political and social commentaries of his speeches — which stood in marked contrast to the *manṣab*'s obtuse recitations of Arabic texts — and the simple, modern, and more egalitarian character of the gathering drew the interests of the Javanese Muslim entrepreneurs who were educated in modern schools. As Ismail's *jamāʿa* drew more and more people, that of the *manṣab*'s was shrinking.

The third development that led to the constriction of the *manṣab*'s *jamāʿa* was the establishment of a modern Islamic school, the Ma'had Islam in 1942. The school was established by Abdullah Hinduan, a Bā ʿAlawī graduate of Cairo University. Unlike the Ḥaddādian Salafiyyah school established by al-ʿAṭṭās, Ma'had Islam is bilingual. Unlike the former, its curriculum includes the study of natural sciences, geography, mathematics, and history. In teaching Islamic studies, the school relies not on the creed, the *mukhtaṣar*, and the *rātib,* but on the Indonesian translations of modern Egyptian school textbooks. Using a modern standardized curriculum meant that students of the school could continue their study to public high schools and universities, an educational trajectory that was almost impossible for Salafiyyah students, which suggest a clear this-worldly instrumental reason that Ma'had Islam was aligning to. Ma'had Islam does not identify itself as a Ḥaḍramī, let alone a Bā ʿAlawī institution. The

teachers and staff included Bā ʿAlawīs, non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramīs, and Javanese Muslims. Ever since its establishment, the school has become the preferred institution of elementary learning in Pekalongan, forming social bonds among Arab (both Bā ʿAlawī and non-Bā ʿAlawī) and Javanese children. While there were other modern Islamic schools ran by al-Irshād and Muhammadiyah, only staunch supporters of these institutions would send their children there. The popularity of modern schools led to the decline of enrollment in Salafiyyah, and in the early 1970s, the *manṣab* finally closed down the school.

The three developments that resulted in the constriction of the *jamāʿa* that made up the *manṣabate* did not mean that the *manṣab* was left without followers. After all, these developments only involved those living within the city (*kotamadya*) of Pekalongan. The annual *ḥawl* that draws thousands of people from all over Java, for instance, continues to attest to the *manṣab*'s gravitas. At the same time, the modernizing currents within the city drove *manṣab* ʿAlī, and subsequently his son and grandson, to focus on cultivating followings amongst those living south of the coastal city, in the hinterlands that make up the *Kabupaten* (regency) Pekalongan. Most towns and hamlets in the *kabupaten* have continued to be the bastion of the traditionalist Nahdlatul 'Ulama. There, the role of traditionalist *kyais* in peoples' daily life remains central down to the present day. Unlike al-ʿAṭṭās or most Ḥadramīs for that matter, the three succeeding *manṣabs* were active in the hinterlands, leading weddings, funerals, and other devotional recitations. In one day the *manṣab* could lead religious ceremonies in three different villages in different parts of the *kabupaten*, receiving remuneration for their service. They succeeded in establishing genial relations with local *kyais,* entrepreneurs, landlords, and village heads. In return, people from the *kabupaten* would come and flock the events held at the Masjid al-Rawḍa.

As the only Bā ʿAlawīs who were actively cultivating *jamāʿa* in the hinterlands, the *manṣab* family was for most people in the *kabupaten* the only family recognized as *sayyids*. Haji Somad, a resident of Ambukembang, a village in the *kabupaten*, recalled:

> in those days, for most people in the regency, only Habib ʿAlī and his family were considered *sayyids*. We did not know any other. We thought that *ḥabībs* are only those with the surname of al-ʿAṭṭās. Other surnames were just Arab surnames for us.[140]

The *manṣabate* might have lost many members of its former *jamāʿas* within the city of Pekalongan. Nevertheless, it was able to forge new connections and ties with the inhabitants of the *kabupaten,* who in turn became its loyal *jamāʿas.* At least until the final twilight of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined the emergence of the Bā ʿAlawī *Manṣabate* in Java, a new Islamic social assemblage that resonates with a particular configuration of *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* that had historically developed in the tribal territories of Ḥaḍramawt. I argue that the growth and segregation of Ḥaḍramī migrants in the late nineteenth century Java had led to the emergence of exclusive and self-consciously Ḥaḍramī *jamāʿas* marked by a heightened sense of ethnic identity. Such a social formation excluded older Bā ʿAlawī families, many of whom had been Javanized and assumed *priyayi* status, and the hybrid cultural tradition they represented. The growth of the Ḥaḍramī population in Java also entailed the diversification of its composition. Members of Ḥaḍramī tribes — many of whom had for long lived under the spiritual authority of different Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabates* — were also migrating. This resulted in the reproduction of older social ties

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[140] Today, Habib Luthfī bin Yaḥyā is widely recognized by people in *kabupaten* Pekalongan. Almost everyday he receives invitations to gatherings held by people from the *kabupaten.* Often time, however, the invitation is addressed to "Habib Luthfi bin Yahya al-Attas," as many still conflate the honorific Ḥabīb with the al-ʿAṭṭās family, and do not recognize bin Yaḥyā as a name of another Bā ʿAlawī family.

akin to those that materialized in the *ḥawṭas,* rather than the ideally flattened Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* solely bound by a standardized *sunna*-derived theological, ethical, and devotional code.

Practices that emerged at a specific point in modern history and were responding to specific challenges, are today posited and identified as the Bā ʿAlawī Islamic tradition, or the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya.* Specific practices of mediating the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*, developed in the Arab quarters of Java in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, have overtime been defined and objectified as what constitutes the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Consequently, Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabates* throughout Java, as the institutional locus of these practices, became recognized as the principal socio-discursive assemblage that articulates and materializes the *ṭarīqa*. Religious authority became concentrated in the person of the *manṣab,* who is recognized as the leader of the Bā ʿAlawī and the public face of the *ṭarīqa*.

The *manṣabate*, however, was not the only new figuration of *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* that emerged among the Ḥaḍramīs of Java in the beginning of the Twentieth Century. The same period also witnessed various attempts to redefine the *sunna* in light of modern scientific progress and new ways of aligning it to individual Muslims inspired by modern Islamic reform movements in the urban centers of Egypt and the Levantine and transmitted to the Dutch East Indies through the circulation of periodicals. This in turn led to the emergence of a novel Islamic social assemblage, namely, the *jamʿiyya* or modern voluntary association and modern schools founded on a quite different understanding of what constitutes the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* as compared to the Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* or the *manṣabate*.

It is important, however, to note that (1) both the *manṣabate* and the *jamʿiyya* developed concurrently; and that (2) both were premised on contrastive conception of Islam as a project of

constituting a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* which in turn generated conflicts and contestations between them. It is also crucial to note that oftentimes (3) those who were involved in a *jamʿiyya* were also related to the *manṣabate* in one way or another, and that the people who constitute both *jamāʿas* may overlap. We should therefore refrain from looking at these two *jamāʿas* from a teleological perspective that concludes with the triumph of "modern" over "traditional" institutions as many scholars have explicitly stated or implicitly insinuated (Anderson [1983] 1991; Milner 1995; Freitag 2003; Laffan 2003; Mobini-Kesheh 1999). The fact that some of the *jamʿiyyas* subscribe to a teleological view of history, or to what Keane (2007) has described as *moral narrative of modernity,* does not mean that the analyst ought to reproduce such an ideology in his/her analysis. As such, the *manṣabate* and the *jamʿiyya* should be understood as two divergent but overlapping socio-discursive formations that emerged from different projects of calibrating the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* both of which have continued to grow and remained important to Indonesian Muslims down to the present day.

Entr'acte

The preceding chapters have traced the emergence, development, and evolution of a particular project of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* I have described this project as the Ḥaddādian paradigm, after ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād who systematically laid down its theoretical foundations. This project was pursued by resolute Bā ʿAlawī scholars and their disciples who cultivated Ḥaddādian *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas* in different parts of Ḥaḍramawt and in the port cities of the Indian Ocean. In these circles, al-Ḥaddād's prominence has grown remarkably. Today, he is known not only as a scholar, a *shaykh al-taʿlīm* and a reformer, but also as an axial saint (*quṭb*), meaning a saint who presides over an invisible hierarchy of saints. He is the *quṭb al-daʿwa wa-l-irshād*, the axial saint of guidance and *daʿwa*.

Whilst in Jakarta, I visited the recently refurbished mausoleum complex of a Sumatran-born Bā ʿAlawī saint, Ḥabīb Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddād (d. c.1899), popularly known as *Mbah Priok* (old man of Priok), as his tomb is situated adjacent to the Tanjung Priok container terminal. The mausoleum complex is surrounded by a whitewashed wall (figure E.1). Directly above the gate is a *jawi* (Malay written in Arabic script) inscription stating "the saintly tomb (*makam keramat*) of Ḥabīb Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddād". A circular yellow seal is inscribed on the wall left of the gate. At its center is the Arabic letter ʿayn (ع) that stands for the first alphabet of al-Ḥaddād's first name: ʿAbdallāh (عبدالله). Inscribed within the lower curve of the ʿayn is the Arabic numeral 1030 (١٠٣٠), which is the cumulative numerical value, or *abjad*

numerals, of the phrase "Protection of Allāh, His Prophet, and ʿAbdallāh Ḥaddād" (*amānat Allāh wa rasūlihi wa ʿabdallāh ḥaddād*).[141] Above and bellow the ع are two intercessory invocations: "rectify [us] o people of Medina" (*darkāh yā ahl al-madīna*), addressed to the Prophet and his companions in Medina; and "O Tarīm and its inhabitants!" (*yā tarīm wa ahlahā*) addressed to al-Ḥaddād and other Bā ʿAlawī saints. On the left and right of the ع are invocations of the two divine names: "O Provider" (*yā razzāq*) and "O Opener" (*yā fattāḥ*).

Figure E.1: The gate to the mausoleum complex of *Mbah Priok,* Jakarta

The green seal to the right of the gate is nearly identical to the yellow aside from the Arabic alphabet *ḥ* (ح) that forms its center piece, the numeral 110 (١١٠) encapsulated by the lower curve

[141] The *abjad* numeral is a decimal numeral system in which every letter of the Arabic alphabet has an assigned numerical value. People I talked to in Indonesia told me that the numeral 1030 stands for the name ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. When I did the calculation, however, the complete name only adds to 358. I then called a friend in Tarīm, who surprisingly, also explained to me that 1030 stands for al-Ḥaddād's name. When I told him that it did not add up, he directly asked a descendant of al-Ḥaddād, who then explained that 1030 stands for the above phrase. It turns out that the phrase, together with its *abjad* numeral, were inscribed on the gate of the al-Ḥaddād's *bayt al-maqām* (the official house of a reigning head of a saintly family). True enough, the phrase *amānat* (492) *Allāh* (66) *wa* (6) *rasūlihi* (301) *wa* (6) *ʿabdallāh* (142) *ḥaddād* (17) adds to 1030.

of the ح , and the position of the numeral 1030 (١٠٣٠) on top of the ح. The numeral 110 stands for the name ʿAlī and it refers to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Bā ʿAlawī saint and reformer ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1915). The ح denotes the first letter of the family names Ḥaddād (حداد) and Ḥabashī (حبشي). As a combination, the green seal thus states "Protection of Allāh, His Prophet and ʿAbdallāh Ḥaddād [and] ʿAlī Ḥabashī." Appending a seal signifying al-Ḥaddād's spiritual station on the gate of *Mbah Priok*'s mausoleum complex conveys a message of genealogy and spiritual inheritance (*wirātha*). *Mbah Priok* who lies buried in Jakarta, is an heir of al-Ḥaddād buried in Tarīm, who in turn was the spiritual heir of the Prophet buried in Medina. Al-Ḥaddād has become the new standard of sainthood against whom subsequent Bā ʿAlawī saints are recognized, measured, and evaluated.

Figure E.2: A reproduction of the ١٠٣٠ Seal.

As a reproducible semiotic form, the seal facilitates the circulation of an idea — that of al-Ḥaddād's status as a paradigmatic saint. As the seal circulates, however, it enters into new contexts and affords new kinds of actions (Keane 2014). In both Jakarta and Pekalongan, I have repeatedly seen how devout Bā ʿAlawīs write this formula as a protective charm. They inscribe the formula with their index finger on the doors of their houses upon leaving home. They write the formula on a package with a pen or a marker before sending it over the post. Some Bā ʿAlawī scholars place the number ١٠٣٠ as the logo of their Islamic institutions — as an emblem of their religious identity (figure E.3). Younger and technologically-savvy Bā ʿAlawīs use the number as their twitter handle. Recently, the seal has been commodified into hangable artworks, clocks, pendants, enamel pins, rings, jackets, and stickers that come in different colors and sold in merchant stalls around saintly mausoleums (figure E.4). Many devout Bā ʿAlawīs and their followers place the sticker for protection on their car's rear window or on their motorcycles.

Figure E.3: The signboard of the al-Hawi orphanage in Jakarta bearing the ١٠٣٠ seal.

Figure E.4: Commodified forms of the ١٠٣٠ seal.

The mass circulation of the intercessory seal has provoked a strong reaction from those who deem reprehensible the act of invoking and seeking protection from an entity other than God. During my fieldwork, a preacher from Surabaya came to deliver a sermon at the recently-built *salafi* mosque in Pekalongan. The session was only attended by around twenty people. The preacher was talking about various “idolatrous practices” (*praktik-praktik syirik*) prevalent amongst Indonesian Muslims. In the middle of his talk, he suddenly mentioned “idolatrous sticker” (*sticker syirik*) while waiving a sticker of the Ḥaddādian seal. He said:

> I have often seen this sticker on cars, motorcycles, and house doors. The purpose of the sticker is to invite grace (*mengundang berkah*) and protection of the people of Medina and Tarīm, in Ḥaḍramawt, Yemen. Whether you know it or not, affixing this sticker will

> endanger your faith. This sticker is made by the people of *bidʿa* (heretical innovations) who pretend to be the people of the *sunna*. This is an idolatrous sticker as it invokes help from the people of Medina and Tarīm. It says: "help me or I want your blessing, o people of Medina and Tarīm". This is a reprehensible phrase. It should not be taught let alone made into sticker. This sticker is a form of idolatry. And the Prophet was sent to abolish idolatry. So gentleman (*jadi, bapak-bapak*), please do not buy or stick this sticker if you want security in this world and the hereafter (*keselamatan dunia akhirat*).

It seems that the preacher was not familiar with the meaning of the two *abjad* numerals, otherwise he would have voiced his objection to them. Nevertheless, in warding his *jamāʿa* from the dangerous effect of the sticker, the preacher who comes from a diverging Islamic theological tradition takes a stance akin to the Bā ʿAlawīs and their followers. Both parties seem to agree that as a material object, the seal is agentive and efficacious.

The Ḥaddādian seal, however, is not the only intercessory seal that has been circulating in Pekalongan or other places in Java. During my visit to the homes of several Bā ʿAlawīs in Pekalongan, I noticed another intercessory seal proudly framed and displayed in their living rooms (figure E.5). At its center is the name of Muḥammad and his cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī. The first circle is enclosed in another circle bearing the Qurʾānic verse "Allāh wishes to keep uncleanness away from you, people of the [Prophet's] House, and to purify you thoroughly" [Q. 33:33]. Encircling the first two circles are twelve small circles, each bearing the name of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima, and the twelve Shiʿī Imams. This is one among the many variations of emblems displayed by Indonesian Muslims — Bā ʿAlawī or others — who have converted to Shiʿism. The Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan who have converted to Shiʿism — relatively small but growing in numbers — no longer identify themselves with al-Ḥaddād or the Ḥaddādian paradigm. In the course of my interactions with them, it seems clear to me that they are more interested in aligning themselves to Shiʿī religious centers like Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, or Qum

in Iran than their own ancestral city of Tarīm. While still believing in the importance of the Prophet's family and their ability to intercede, they chose to do so solely through the twelve Shiʿī Imams. For them, the twelve imams represent the Prophet's family. They are the pristine embodiments of the Prophetic *sunna.* Similar to the Ḥaddadian Bā ʿAlawīs, they believe that displaying the names of the Imams facilitates the transmission of blessings and benedictions, and wards evil.

Figure E.5: A Seal bearing the names of the Prophet, Fāṭima and the twelve Imams.

Figure E.6: The Bin Yaḥyā intercessory seal.

Towards the end of my fieldwork, I began to notice another intercessory seal displayed by several Javanese Muslims of *Kabupaten* (regency) Pekalongan. The seal is modeled on the Ḥaddādian seal, and retains some of its elements including the phrases: “rectify [us] o people of Medina,” “O Tarīm and its inhabitants!,” “O Provider” (*yā razzāq*), and “O Opener” (*yā fattāḥ*). At the center of the seal however, is not the Arabic letter ʿayn (ع) or ḥ (ح) like in the two variations of the Ḥaddādian seal, but يح , a conjoining of the two alphabets, ي and ح , which are the first two letters of the word *yaḥyā* (يحيى). Enclosed within the lower curve of the ح is a date — rather than an *abjad* numerals — 956 A.H, the year when Yaḥyā b. Ḥasan, the eponym of the

bin Yaḥyā family, passed away. Encircling the seal is a poetic verse reinforcing the spiritual power (*sulṭa rūhiyya*) of the bin Yaḥyā family :

> When time hurled you oppressively (*bi-l-qahr*), take refuge
> In the protection of the noble Bā ʿAlawīs from the children of Yaḥyā (*banī yaḥyā*)
> For in their homes, the poor becomes wealthy and the shattered is restored,
> And are the dead not, through them, revived (*yuḥyā*)?[142]

While not as popular as the Ḥaddādian seal, this new seal of the bin Yaḥyā family, has begun to circulate among the expanding *jamāʿa* of Habib Luthfi b. ʿAlī bin Yaḥyā. The bin Yaḥyā, as I have discussed in the preceding chapter, has for a long been excluded by the Ḥaddādian *jamāʿa* that emerged among the Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab Quarter. They are remnants of the once proud and influential Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis,* whose spring has now turned to autumn. Does the circulation of this intercessory seal point to their reaction against the Ḥaddādian Bā ʿAlawīs who have adopted condescending attitudes toward them? Or does it herald the changing season that perchance leads to a new spring for the bin Yaḥyās of Pekalongan? The next four chapters explore the genesis of the emerging intercessory seal of the bin Yaḥyā family.

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[142] Subsequently, I learnt that this verse is taken from a poem in praise of the bin Yaḥyā family written by the Bā ʿAlawī scholar and poet Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān bin Shihāb al-Dīn (d. 1341/1922) (see: Shihāb al-Dīn 1925: 82). For the life and activism of this poet, see: Freitag 2003: 187-191.

Chapter V

Divergent Mobility, Adoptive Genealogy

> The client of people belongs to them, whether he is their client as a slave, or as a follower and ally
>
> -The Prophet Muḥammad

> It has been reported that they [the Barmakids] belonged to a Persian house, the members of which had been guardians of the fire temples. When they became clients of the ʿAbbāsids, their original (descent) was not considered. Their nobility resulted from their position as clients and followers of the (ʿAbbāsid) dynasty.
>
> -Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*

> What gladdens my heart is your holding fast to
> The *ṭarīqa* of my father, family, and ancestors
> They are the predecessors who have come to face Allāh
> Following the *sunna* of the Prophet, the elected guide
>
> -ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1915)

In the November 1997, in the midst of the financial crisis that devastated the economies of several major East and Southeast Asian countries including Indonesia, a stone was laid down in the sub-district (*kelurahan*) of Nyoyontaan, Pekalongan in a modest ground-breaking ceremony. Leading the ceremony was a man in his early fifties dressed in a white checked *sarong*, shirt, and prayer cap (*kufi*). Ground-breaking ceremony was a rarity in a time of crisis. The significant devaluation of the Indonesian currency had halted most construction projects. Yet it was during such a time of economic and political uncertainty that the man in white resolutely embarked on a major construction project. That man was Habib Muhammad Luthfi b. Ali bin Yahya

(Muḥammad Luṭfī b. ʿAlī bin Yaḥyā), and he was officiating the construction of a congregational center that would serve as the physical site of his *jamāʿa*.

Prior to the completion of the congregational center, Habib Luthfi had been interacting with his growing *jamāʿa* in his small house in one of the alleys of Nyoyontaan. Having neither a mosque, nor a *langgar* (small prayer hall), Habib Luthfi had to be content with holding different Islamic rituals at his house. His *jamāʿa* flocked and congested the alley, generating complaints from the neighbors. Most of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* did not come from Pekalongan. They traveled from different parts of Java to sit and listen to the wise words of their *murshid* (Sufi mentor). "Those days there were not many locals attending Habib Luthfi's gathering," recalled *Kyai* Zakariya whilst munching on the last bit of vegetable fritters (*bakwan*). A scholar in his mid thirties, Zakariya has recently established his own *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Pekalongan. His father was a close disciple of Habib Luthfi, and since he was nine, Zakariya had been entrusted to Habib Luthfi. On his thirteenth birthday, Zakariya was sent by Habib Luthfi to a *pesantren* in Sarang, Central Java, for further study. He had just returned to Pekalongan when the ground-breaking ceremony took place. "There was an excitement among the *jamāʿa* when they heard that *Abah* (father) Luthfi had finally decided to build a place of assembly (*majelis*)," Zakariya reminisced. Some were deeply skeptical over the project's feasibility in a time of crisis. "But it was an order from the Prophet, and as such it had to be done," Zakariya explained. "Direct order from the Prophet?" I tried to confirm what Zakariya has just told me. He nodded.

Zakariya was the first to tell me the story behind the construction of the congregational center. Since then, I have heard the story recounted multiple times by Habib Luthfi's followers. The story tells the dream of Ibu Khadijah, an elderly Javanese entrepreneur from Solo (Central

Java), who converted to Islam from Catholicism a few years earlier and had become Habib Luthfi's disciple since then. In the dream, Khadijah met the Prophet Muḥammad, who instructed her to build a congregational edifice for Habib Luthfi. Ibu Khadija related her dream to Habib Luthfi, while telling him that she would realize the Prophet's instruction. They were able to get a big piece of land facing the main street by the entrance of the alley where Habib Luthfi lives. During the ground-breaking ceremony, Habib Luthfi unveiled the name of the future building: *Kanzus Shalawat* (*Kanz al-ṣalawāt*), the treasure or vessel of *ṣalawāt* (salutation to the Prophet Muḥammad).

The building of *Kanzus Shalawat* marked an important stage in the consolidation of Habib Luthfi's religious authority in Pekalongan. Having a physical space where people can assemble on a regular basis is crucial for the stabilization of a *jamāʿa.* Such a space has taken on different forms throughout the history of Islam, including congregational mosques, prayer halls, Sufi *zāwiya* and *khānaqa* (hospices), which in many cases also functioned as military camps, administrative centers, treasuries, courts of justice, inns, and marketplaces (Rippin 2008: 450). Sufi lodges and hospices are sites where rules of spiritual training came to be codified and where Sufi masters can showcase their large followings to others (Graham 1993; Farhadi 1993). They have often served as the burial grounds for the masters, thereby transforming such congregational sites into shrines and pilgrimage destinations (Green 2012: 60).

This chapter examines the biographical becoming of Habib Luthfi bin Yahya up to the establishment of the *Kanzus Shalawat*.[143] It looks at the concrete processes that enabled Habib Luthfi to assemble his own *jamāʿa* at a time when Bā ʿAlawī religious authority was primarily

[143] The biographical picture I provided here is my own reconstruction based on interviews and conversations with various people, including Habib Luthfi, as well as on the available primary and secondary materials.

concentrated on the figures of the *manṣabs* (see: chapter 4). Unlike the *manṣabs*, Habib Luthfi does not come from an established background. Habib Luthfi's family hailed from those whom I have described as the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis,* who lost considerable social prestige in the Twentieth Century, and tend to be looked down upon by the Ḥaḍramīs of the Arab quarter. Nor was he born with a "spiritual father" who could bequeath him with a *jamāʿa*. Consequently, Habib Luthfi had to forge connections and genealogical channels that would allow him to become recognized as a *connector* between the Prophet and the Prophetic *sunna*, and other Muslims. Reconstructing Habib Luthfi's biography allows us to develop a contextualized understanding of how a new *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas* emerges through the convergence of different events, histories, networks, and itineraries, all of which are operating on multiple scales. This chapter demonstrates how the case of Habib Luthfi suggests the practical and ideological centrality of genealogy and mobility in the formation of a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* (Shryock 1997; Ho 2006; Birchok 2015; Samin 2015). As a practice, genealogy serves to identify, authenticate, and limit the communicative channels in the transmission of the *sunna* to the *jamāʿa.* Genealogy also operates ideologically as a recognizable basis of religious authority, allowing others to perceive its bearer as a credible *connector*. As a practice, mobility facilitates the dissemination of the *sunna* to the *jamāʿa,* while allowing traveling actors to become entangled with different genealogies. Mobility also operates ideologically in that certain travels and destinations, say traveling to Mecca or Ḥaḍramawt for educational purpose, are posited as more authoritative to the scholarly credentials of an actor than traveling to a local Javanese *pesantren*.

Furthermore, this chapter explores the contingent connection between genealogy and mobility. In his work, Engseng Ho has shown how genealogy serves as a theory of ethical

mobility, in that the temporally-structured genealogy serves to direct the spatial mobility of the bearer of the genealogy (Ho 2006: 153-4). In light of Ho's work, the case of Habib Luthfi, becomes interesting due to the divergence of his mobility from the directive of his own genealogy. This, however, allowed Habib Luthfi to become incorporated into other genealogies through what I call *genealogical adoption.* Diverging mobility and adoptive genealogy in turn constitute both the spatial and temporal foundations of Habib Luthfi's religious authority.

From Nyoyontaan to Benda Kerep

Habib Luthfi was born in 1947 in the district of Nyoyontaan, Pekalongan. Unlike most Ḥaḍramī families, his family did not live in the Arab quarter, but in an alley in Nyoyontaan among the less-well off Javanese. His father, ʿAlī, was a violinist playing for a local musical troupe that performed locally. His mother, Nūr, looked after her six children, while working as an intermediary in the sale of diamonds and jewelries between the old and impoverished Javanese *priyayi* families and the wives of the rich Ḥaḍramī entrepreneurs of the Arab quarter. Both Habib Luthfi's paternal and maternal families are Bā ʿAlawī families who have been in Java for at least seven generations. While his maternal family has been in Pekalongan for one hundred and fifty years, most of his paternal kins lived in Indramayu and Cirebon (West Java). It was his paternal grandfather, Hāshim, who migrated to Pekalongan from Indramayu in the 1920s.

According to Habib Luthfi, both his paternal and maternal families had ties to local Javanese nobilities as well as to the royal court of Yogyakarta. Prior to the Twentieth Century, they occupied administrative posts in Indramayu and Pekalongan. Like many *priyayi* families, however, Habib Luthfi's family had experienced a significant blow to their social prestige, losing their administrative post and gradually their properties. This is particularly true in a city like

Pekalongan, where the financially and socially powerful entrepreneurial oligarchs — whether Arab, Chinese, or Javanese — have been actively acquiring the properties of the increasingly impoverished *priyayis.*

Habib Luthfi grew up playing with Javanese boys in Nyoyontaan. He did not know many Ḥaḍramī boys from the Arab quarter, who in those days, would look down upon their fellow Ḥaḍramīs who hailed from older and more Javanized Bā ʿAlawī families. Unlike most Ḥaḍramī boys of the Arab quarter who went to private Islamic schools like the Ḥaddādian Salafiyya or the modernist Maʿhad, Habib Luthfi went to a government primary school. Upon graduating from primary school in 1959, Habib Luthfi's father sent him to the old *pesantren* Benda Kerep in Cirebon. Established by Kyai Sholeh Zamzami (d. 1727) in the early eighteenth century, Benda Kerep has been known as an ultra conservative institution known for prohibiting the usage of electricity and other modern technological innovations in its vicinity (Muhaimin 2006). The *pesantren* was known as a center of the Shaṭṭāriyya *ṭarīqa.* It was at Benda Kerep that Habib Luthfi became acquainted with Sufism and Sufi *ṭarīqa* as practiced by his Javanese teachers. As a student, however, his primary concern at the time was with the study of exoteric sciences of Islam like Arabic grammar, theology, and Islamic Law.

Established Javanese *pesantrens* like Benda Kerep are focused on producing instructors who can provide Islamic theological and legal education to their fellow Javanese Muslims. Education in such a milieu is geared towards developing a mastery of Ashʿarite theological and Shāfiʿī legal texts, particularly the ability to translate them into Javanese. Being educated in a *pesantren* like Benda Kerep allowed Habib Luthfi to develop his mastery of the Javanese language, especially the high register (*kromo inggil*), not commonly used by people living in

coastal cities like Pekalongan. Being in Cirebon also enabled him to learn Sundanese. At the same time, studying in a Javanese *pesantren* allowed Habib Luthfi to develop connections with traditionalist Javanese scholars — most of whom were not educated abroad — as well as with his fellow students who subsequently became scholars with their own followings. Competency in local languages and connection with traditionalist Javanese and Sundanese scholars — both of which were gained during Habib Luthfi's formative years at Benda Kerep — became the crucial foundation to his future success. His subsequent popularity as a preacher among the Javanese was due, among other things, to his ability to speak in different Javanese and Sundanese linguistic registers, including those spoken in the *pesantrens* and the villages. Such a communicative ability and his grasp of myriad local idioms is rarely exhibited by other Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī scholars.

Habib Luthfi's formative education diverged from the educational trend of most Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī scholars. While generally, Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Indonesia studied under older Bā ʿAlawī scholars, Habib Luthfi learnt Islamic sciences under Javanese *kyais.* As an illustration, let us compare Habib Luthfi's education to that of the current *manṣab* of Pekalongan, Habib Abdullah Bagir Alatas. As a scion of a saintly house, Habib Bagir was immersed in the Ḥaddādian tradition since his childhood. He studied with both his father and grandfather before enrolling in a *pesantren* in East Java ran by the charismatic Bā ʿAlawī scholar Hussein b. Abu Bakar al-Habsyi (d. 1994). Known as the Yayasan Pesantren Islam (Islamic Pesantren Foundation, YAPI), the *pesantren* was founded in Bondowoso 1973, and subsequently moved to Bangil in 1976. YAPI was the preferred educational destination for young Bā ʿAlawīs of Habib Bagir's generation, especially those who wanted to focus on religious sciences. The majority of

YAPI's teachers and students were Bā ʿAlawīs. Classes were conducted, not in Javanese, but in Arabic and Indonesian. Unlike traditionalist *pesantren* and its emphasis on the mastery of Shafiʿī legal texts and the ability to translate them into Javanese, the emphasis of YAPI was on Arabic language acquisition that would allow students to continue their study abroad. Through his involvement with the Pan-Islamic Muslim World League (*Rabiṭa al-ʿālam al-islāmī*), al-Habsyi had developed a close connection with an eminent Meccan scholar with close links to the Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, Sayyid Muḥammad b. ʿAlawī al-Māliki (d. 2006). Al-Māliki had agreed to take on — and even financially support — promising YAPI students. Dozens of young Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs — most of whom were the children of *manṣabs* and scholars — were sent to Mecca during the 1980s. Alongside the Bā ʿAlawīs were the children of Javanese *kyais* who had established connections with either al-Habsyi or al-Māliki. After spending a decade in the holy city, they returned to their hometowns and succeeded their fathers' socioreligious roles. In contrast to the traditionalist Javanese *pesantrens*, YAPI — like other Bā ʿAlawī *pesantrens* — sees itself as offering intermediate education that prepares students for further studies in what is perceived as the Islamic heartlands.[144] Central to the view of al-Ḥabashī and most Bā ʿAlawī scholars, Islamic education in Java is simply inadequate, and as such, local Islamic educational institutions should be geared towards preparing students to continue their education abroad.

The difference in the educational experience of Habib Luthfi and Habib Bagir shaped their communicative skills and social circles. While Habib Bagir speaks flawless Arabic, he does not really speak any local languages except for the low Javanese spoken in Pekalongan. His

[144] Prior to 1969, most Bā ʿAlawī boys were sent to the Islamic boarding schools of Ḥaḍramawt. The establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the hardline Marxist policy adopted by the government led to the closing down of the Islamic boarding schools. As a result, Mecca replaced Ḥaḍramawt as the main educational destination for Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs.

interactions with his Javanese *jamāʿa* or with other Javanese scholars tend to be conducted in formal Indonesian, rather than Javanese, which in most cases, creates a distance between him and his audience. Habib Luthfi, on the other hand, tends to use Javanese or Sundanese in both formal and informal settings, depending on the audience. Nevertheless, whenever he talks about nationalism or about the Indonesian state, he switches to formal Indonesian as if the national language is the only proper medium to convey such ideas, and which, to a certain extent, betrays his educational experience in a state school. In contrast to Habib Bagir, Habib Luthfi's conversations are almost always interspersed with jokes, which in most interactions I have observed, are used as icebreakers that reduce the distance between him and his audience.

Unlike Habib Luthfi's vast networks among Javanese scholars, Habib Bagir's social network mainly revolves around his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs and a number of Javanese *kyais* who went to study with al-Māliki. His fluency in Arabic and his experience of living in Mecca, however, allowed Habib Bagir to develop connections and rapport with scholars from the Hejaz, the Ḥaḍramawt, and other parts of the Muslim world. Habib Luthfi, on the other hand, found it quite difficult to communicate with foreign scholars as Arabic conversational skills were never part of the curriculum of the traditionalist Javanese *pesantren*. Graduates of Javanese *pesantrens* may master Arabic grammar to the last details, which enables them to comprehend intricate Arabic texts and even poetry, but most lack adequate conversational skills that would allow them to converse effectively in Arabic. As a result, Habib Luthfi tends to rely on interpreters when interacting with foreign scholars.

Habib Luthfi's family background and his formative education thus differentiated him from his fellow Bā ʿAlawī scholars in significant ways. Growing up in Nyoyontaan, attending a

state school, and enrolling in a traditionalist Javanese *pesantren* shaped his ability to engage and interact with the broader Javanese society which usually lies outside the parochialized social circle of most Ḥaḍramīs in Java. His competency in several local languages and his early exposure to Javanese scholarly networks had prepared him to build alliances that proved vital to his future career. Nevertheless, this did come with a price. While Habib Luthfi's formative education prepared him to build a strong network in Java, it limited his ability to engage with international Muslim scholars, having to rely on interpreters. Furthermore, in the eyes of most Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī scholars, Habib Luthfi's local education was simply inadequate. During my fieldwork I have continuously heard Habib Luthfi's scholarly credibility being questioned by his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs on the grounds of his inability to conduct a conversation in Arabic. Other Bā ʿAlawī scholars would not take him seriously simply because he did not study with Bā ʿAlawī teachers or because he went to a Javanese *pesantren*. Such an attitude is summed up in the way Habib Bagir addresses Habib Luthfi whenever they meet. Rather than using the honorific *habib* — which is a title used to refer to a Bā ʿAlawī scholar in Ḥaḍramawt and Indonesia — Habib Bagir uses the honorific *kyai* to greet him: *Kyai* Luthfi.

Divergent Mobility

Warung Bang Hoody is a restaurant in South Jakarta owned by Hood Segaf, a young and second-generation Bā ʿAlawī restauranteur. In the evenings, the outdoor seating area is frequented by Bā ʿAlawīs, who converse all night until Hood turns off the lights and kicks them out. Warung Bang Hoody is a place where one hears the latest gossip on Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs. It is also a place to meet elusive individuals who are otherwise difficult to encounter, like Ali Ba'agil (b. 1971). A native of Tegal, Central Java, Ali's life is full of controversies. An alumnus of YAPI, Ali began

his career as a clairvoyant able to read peoples' minds, an ability that took him to high places. In the 1990s he became close to Soeharto's family and several leading army officers, including General Wiranto, the commander of the armed forces. In 1998, Ali's name surfaced in the national media when he assembled a militia to support the newly-installed President Habibie — a handpicked successor of Soeharto — against the pro-reform student activists. In that same year, Ali introduced a young and relatively unknown Bā ʿAlawī school teacher, Rizieq Shahab, to his military friends leading to the establishment of the Islamic Defenders Front (Front Pembela Islam, FPI).[145] In 2000, his name once again became the talk of the town when the then President Abdurahman Wahid publicly named Ali together with Soeharto's youngest son, Tommy, as the masterminds behind the bombing of the Jakarta Stock Exchange.

One evening, as I was conversing with Hood at the restaurant, Ali walked in and sat with us. We talked and joked about Indonesian politics and his relationship with the Indonesian military. Unexpectedly, he said, "I heard from people you are doing your research on Habib Luthfi?". When I nodded, he then said, "why do you bother with him? He is just a *dawir,* not a scholar who graduated from an institution (*maʿhad*). Why would someone who studied in America spend his time writing about Luthfi?" Ali remained dismissive when I explained to him about my interest in Habib Luthfi. Minutes later, he lost interest in the topic and decided to talk to Hood about the property market.

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[145] While FPI was founded to support the then President Habibie against pro-reform student movements, over the years, the organization has become notorious for its tendency to resort to violent means in establishing its socioreligious agendas, including raiding bars and cafes that stayed open during the fasting month and clashing with other activists who were espousing "deviant" religious views. While the FPI has also done positive work, most notably their role in the 2004 Tsunami disaster relief, the organization and its leaders have been consistently portrayed as troublemakers by the Indonesian mainstream media. For more on the FPI, see: Jahroni 2008; Bamuallim 2011; Fealy 2004; Douglas Wilson 2008; Woodward et al 2012; Woodward et al 2014; Pausacker 2012.

What is interesting from this brief conversation was his use of the term *dawir* to characterize Habib Luthfi. The word *dawir,* as used by Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs, comes from the Arabic word *dawr*, meaning to go around, revolve, or circulate. One may think that *dawir* is an apt general description of the Bā ʿAlawīs, whose long history has been marked by spatial mobility (Ho 2006). In contemporary Java, however, the term has been used derogatorily to refer to Bā ʿAlawīs — or other Ḥaḍramīs pretending to be Bā ʿAlawīs — who frequent the rural areas of Java to profit from the respect shown towards them by Javanese villagers and village-based *kyais*. A *dawir* is usually an itinerant peddler who brings various merchandises to be sold at exorbitant prices, knowing that the *kyais* or the villagers would never dare to bargain. Others play the role of holy men reciting prayers and invocations in exchange for monetary gifts. This practice of preying on the rural populations has exasperated both Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *manṣabs*, as well as Javanese *kyais*. As a result, different forms of mobility that involved traveling to the rural areas have been increasingly viewed with suspicion among the urban-based Bā ʿAlawīs. A time-honored tradition that suffered from this changing perception of mobility is the old practice of *lelono* or wandering in search for knowledge, an important educational *rite de passage* among the Javanese with its root in the Islamic tradition of *riḥla* (See: chapter 1).

Literally speaking, Ali is correct in characterizing Habib Luthfi as a *dawir*, for he did wander around the rural area of Java for an protracted amount of time. After being at the *pesantren* Benda Kerep for five years, Habib Luthfi traveled to different places in Java to study with living Javanese and Bā ʿAlawī scholars. Among his teachers were *kyai* Muhammad Bajuri (Indramayu, West Java), *kyai* Said b. Armiya (Tegal, Central Java), *kyai* Abdullah Hadziq (Jepara, Central Java), Habib Aḥmad Bāfaqīh (Yogyakarta), *kyai* Utsman al-Ishaqi (Surabaya,

East Java), Habib Ali Bafaqih (Negara, Bali), and Habib ʿUmar b. Ismāʿīl bin Yaḥyā (Cirebon, West Java). In the Javanese traditionalist circles, these individuals are usually referred to as *kyai khas* — from the Arabic *khāṣ* (elite) — meaning, Muslim scholars who are primarily known for their mastery of Islamic esoteric knowledge, like Sufism. Most *Kyai khas* belong to a *ṭarīqa*, although not all of them perform the role of a *murshid* (Sufi mentor) who guides their followers. Most do not establish *pesantren*, choosing to teach few students from the privacy of their own homes. Apart from teaching a small number of students, *kyai khas* usually perform other roles in their localities such as conciliating village conflicts, curing illnesses, and writing amulets.

Most Bā ʿAlawīs in Pekalongan are not aware of Habib Luthfi's long years of peregrination, although they all know that Habib Luthfi was "missing" from Pekalongan for more than two decades. During my travel to different localities in Java as part of Habib Luthfi's entourage I often met people — mostly from rural areas — who knew Habib Luthfi from his wandering days. Hearing that Habib Luthfi was delivering a speech in a nearby town or city, they came from the villages to see him. Some of the Pekalongan Bā ʿAlawī who were with me were amazed by the familiarity of these villagers with Habib Luthfi. From the way they interact and joke, one can surmise that they had known Habib Luthfi long before he became an established scholar. When Habib Luthfi would sit with them, he would inquire about particular places in, and individuals from their villages, further betraying a degree of intimacy and familiarity. A man in his eighties, came to see Habib Luthfi whilst we were staying at the regent's official house in Jepara (Central Java). He had come on foot from a village around six miles east of the city. He cried when he met Habib Luthfi and hugged him affectionately, even stroking his head, saying

"my eldest son, my eldest son" (*mbarep kulo*).[146] When I asked the octogenarian about his relationship with Habib Luthfi he recounted a long story about how the Habib used to live in his village for two years, staying with a local *kyai khas*. He recounted how Habib Luthfi used to stay by the *kyai*'s side, serving his food and coffee, or massaging his feet.

During one of our travels, I asked Habib Luthfi about what he learnt during his wandering days. It was two in the morning and we were on the road from Surabaya to Pekalongan. Habib Luthfi looked exhausted and he was ready to fall asleep. But before he dozed off, he said:

> In the *pesantren*, I learnt dead knowledge (*ilmu mati*), again and again (*lagi lagi*) text, text, and text. During my traveling days (*waktu pengembaraan*) and living with several of my teachers, who were not known for their textual knowledge (*ilmu tekstual*), I learnt wisdom (*ḥikma*) … I learnt living knowledge (*ilmu hidup*)."

Habib Luthfi closed his eyes, and it seemed he was asleep. I was still unsatisfied with his answer, so I asked him again as to what he meant by wisdom and living knowledge, to which he responded, "you are the anthropologist. You study human life. You of all people should know."

At the time, I did not pursue further my queries about wisdom or living knowledge, but months later what Habib Luthfi alluded to, became clear when I witnessed his interaction with several *pesantren* graduates who visited him to ask for advice. Habib Luthfi congratulated them for finishing their study at their *pesantren*:

> *Alhamdulillah*, you have learnt all the necessary texts in the *pesantren.* What remains for you is to try to gain wisdom. Remember what Allāh said to the Prophet: *Allāh had sent down the scripture (al-kitāb) and wisdom (ḥikma)* [Q. 4:113]. Having knowledge of the scripture without wisdom means that your knowledge is frozen. But if you have wisdom, the knowledge of the scripture that you have within you will shine forth and produce positive impact on your surroundings. You learn wisdom not from the books. You learn it

[146] In Java, it is considered impolite to touch another person's head, more so when that person is of a higher social standing, except if that person is one's younger brother, son, or nephew.

> from the people, by being with them and listening to them. By understanding their culture (*kultur*) and knowing how it shapes (*membentuk*) their society and psychology. Culture is something that is built over time. It crystalizes through history (*mengkristal melalui sejarah*). So to gain wisdom you need to understand history. Every place in Java has its own unique culture. Every village has its own history. Now you have just graduated from the *pesantren*, and I understand that you have a strong zeal (*himmah yang kuat*) to teach others what you have learnt, especially when you see practices that go against the Prophetic *sunna*. But you should also learn that life is complex. Society is complex. Do not try to make people change their habits if you want them to hear you. Instead, learn from them just like you have learnt from your *kyais*. Understand their customs and habits (*adat dan kebiasaan*), then you will be able to infuse them (*mengisinya*) with divine teachings. This was how the Nine Saints (*wali songo*) Islamized Java. They studied the field, the climate, the topography, and they knew the tools at hand. Because of that, they were able to devise the best techniques and choose seeds that can bear fruits. They did not plant date palms although they came from Arabia. They planted coconut palms knowing full well that they can grow, bear fruits, and benefit the society. Had they planted date palms, do you think they would have been able to bear fruits? no, right (*ndak kan*)? That would be a dead knowledge. Remember the Prophet prescribed different things to different people according to their capacities. His *sunna* is contextual and not uniform (*tidak seragam*). To some of his companions he prescribed an invocation that needs to be repeated one thousand times. To another he prescribed the same invocation to be repeated only thirty three times. This is why your knowledge of the scripture has to be accompanied by your knowledge of history and culture so that you understand the people around you. Remember, do not just impose the teachings of the Prophet to others, you yourselves should try to act like the Prophet.

This was the clearest exposition of Habib Luthfi's general outlook that I heard throughout our two years of interaction. It sums up Habib Luthfi's own take on Islam as a project of cultivating a *jamāʿa* that revolves around the *sunna* of the Prophet. In Habib Luthfi's view, wisdom is a knowledge that one learns from one's surroundings and is generated through social processes. It is accrued through ways that resonate with what I have learnt in an Anthropology class: living with the people and observing the messiness of real life, listening and learning from them rather than subjecting them to our own views, trying to understand how their histories have shaped their culture, which in turn shapes their customs and habits. Of course in the case of Habib Luthfi, it goes further than that as such a teaching has a clear "policy implication" that ought to be adopted

by Muslim scholars in their effort to Islamize the society. But what is also highlighted in this exposition is his understanding of the *sunna*. For Habib Luthfi, the Prophetic *sunna* is not singular. The Prophet prescribed different things to different people because he was aware of individual variations. In Habib Luthfi's view, a one-size-fits-all approach simply will not work due to the complexity of human life. As such, the ways in which the *sunna* is selected and articulated ought to depend on the particularity of the *jamāʿa*. This, according to Habib Luthfi, was the approach adopted by the Nine Saints, and indeed it bears a resemblance to the story of Sunan Kalijaga and his act of calibrating the *qibla* of the Demak mosque as recounted in the beginning of chapter 1. At the same time, Habib Luthfi seems to question the dominant and pervasive figuration of Islamic authority that I have described as the *shaykh al-taʿlīm*.

In his speeches or conversations, Habib Luthfi often points to how it was precisely during his long years of peregrination, that he came to this particular understanding of the relationship between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Below are few selections from his speeches and conversations, in which he talks about some of the things he learned during his wandering years:

> When I was living with *Mbah* (grandfather) *kyai* Arwani in Kudus [Central Java], I asked him, "*Mbah*, why is it that in Kudus, no one slaughters a cow during the *ʿīd al-aḍḥā* (Festival of the Sacrifice)?" *Mbah* Arwani explained to me how this has been the way people of Kudus practice Islam. They forbid the slaughtering of cows, although it is *ḥalāl* (legally permissible). This rule was introduced by the Lord Sunan Kudus [one of the nine saints of Java], when he noticed that most people living in Kudus were Hindus and he did not want to offend them by slaughtering cows. So he made a new rule that forbids the slaughtering of cows during the *ʿĪd al-aḍḥā*, and asked his followers to slaughter water buffalos instead.
>
> Whenever the villagers in Sokaraja [Banyumas, Central Java] held a *slametan* (ritual feast) they would put a cup filled with a mixture of tea and coffee at the center of where people were sitting. They called it *wedang jembawuk*, and it was meant as an offering to the ancestral spirits (*arwah leluhur*). My teacher *Mbah* Ilyas never discouraged them from doing so. He would be invited by the villagers to attend the *slametan* and he would

> do so without saying anything. One day, *Mbah* Ilyas told the village elders that one cup is not adequate as an offering. They should add another six cups and that each should contain different sweetened liquid. He himself started to put seven cups during a *slametan* that he held, each containing coffee, tea, Fanta, orange juice, milk, Coca Cola, and coconut water. When the villagers asked him as to the significance of the seven sweet liquids, he told them that when the Prophet Muḥammad was dying he asked for seven cups of waters taken from the seven springs of Medina. As to their sweetness, the Prophet used to like sweet things and that the great saint Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jaylānī used to distribute sweets to people. So today the tradition of having seven sweet liquids has persisted in Sokaraja and what *Mbah* Ilyas did was to make what used to be an offering to the ancestral spirits into a way to remember the Prophet.
>
> During my days at Sindang Laut (West Java), many people used to drink *tuak* (palm wine). And yet, *Mbah* Bajuri never faulted them for drinking. He always told us that when one sees a person drinking, look at the bottle, and not the person holding it; meaning one should despise the alcohol and not the person holding it. As a result, people were not embarrassed to meet *Mbah* Bajuri. He used to tell them that it is okay to drink even in his house, and people would sit with him even when they were drunk. *Mbah* Bajuri never did things that would discourage them from coming to his house. When sitting with them, *Mbah* Bajuri would talk about the Prophet, how open he was to people who were one hundred times more difficult than the Javanese. Once, he even asked a drunk guy to call the *adhān* (call to prayer). The person was so proud of the task that afterwards he never drink again.
>
> My teacher Habib ʿUmar b. ʿIsmāʿīl bin Yaḥyā was widely respected by people in Arjawinangun [West Java]. One day, during my first month living with him, the villagers came to him with a guy in chains. Apparently it was Kang Rojikin, a local thug (*jagoan*). Upon seeing Kang Rojikin in chains, Habib ʿUmar said to the villagers, "is that a human or an animal that you put in chains? quick release him, that is not the way to treat a human being." The villagers told him that Kang Rojikin was caught stealing a chicken and they are going to take him to the police. Habib ʿUmar told the villagers, "don't do that, he is our own brother; we are all together." He took Kang Rojikin by his hand, and told him "do not worry, I will give you some money to buy a chicken, you do not have to steal," and told the villagers, "he was just thinking about how to feed his wife and children, it is our responsibility as his neighbors to help him." He gave some money to Kang Rojikin and told him to buy nice food for his family, and he told the villagers to find a good job for Kang Rojikin.

From these excerpts, one can see how Habib Luthfi's experience of living in several rural villages, encountering problems that arose from the messiness of social life, and seeing his teachers handling such situations in different ways, formed his sensitivity towards cultural and

societal differences that demand differing approaches. In all of these cases, scholars share intimate experience with the villagers. They used local events as an opportunity to articulate the *sunna,* rather than imposing it on them. In the cases discussed above, the *kyai khas* were less interested in applying categorical legal concepts — like *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām —,* nor were they interested in predetermining outcomes. Rather, they were more interested in producing new meanings out of old practices or maintaining communal harmony. Not unlike the traditional Moroccan and Yemeni *qāḍīs* (judges) observed by Lawrence Rosen (1989) and Brinkley Messick (1993), in the hands of the *kyai khas,* Islamic norms and law become organically linked to surrounding cultural processes. Habib Luthfi once told me how living in the villages made him realize how the models of Islamic societies that he learned with the *shaykh al-taʿlīms* in the *pesantren* — most of which are taken from medieval Baghdad or Cairo — are arcane and inadequate to be realized in a place like Java, where people are facing different problems. As such, his approach diverges from the Ḥaddādian paradigm championed by his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs with its insistence on standardized practice. What differentiates Habib Luthfi from his fellow Bā ʿAlawī scholars is the rootedness of the former in the complexities and pluralities of Javanese landscapes, cultures, and histories. And it is this rich experience that enabled him to effectively communicate with Muslims from different parts of Java.

Perhaps one can suggest that such a sensitivity towards cultural differences and social complexities is precisely what is gained through the old educational practice of *lelono* or *riḥla*. This is not to say that *lelono* is not geared towards acquisition of esoteric knowledge, or *ngelmu* as it is usually described in Java. Nor does it negate the fact that the objective of such a deep education was developing virtues through face-to-face contact with saintly individuals, as the

historian Peter Brown (1981) describes it in the case of the Christian adoption of the Greek *paideia* in the Late Antiquity. It is simply to suggest the need to pay more attention to the socio-cultural dimension of *lelono* or *riḥla* beyond the disciplinary relationship between the master and the disciple. At least in the case of Java — where scholars and spiritual masters live among local populations and play important mediating roles — *lelono* or *rihla does not* negate social space and time, contrary to what one anthropologist has suggested regarding the tradition of Sufi wandering in Morocco (Hammoudi 1997: 91).

What the case of Habib Luthfi accentuates is precisely how *lelono* or *riḥla* exposes students, particularly those who were trained in scholastic settings, to the complexity of social life. Indeed it bears a striking resemblance to anthropological fieldwork, in which the fieldworker learns about the inadequacy of straightforward application or translation of various social scientific theories, models, and approaches learned in the classrooms. *Lelono* or *riḥla* is a process of learning to act like the Prophet, and not just simply repeating what he said and expecting people to follow. As a dialogical process, *lelono* teaches a wandering student that a productive alignment between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* requires the mutual calibration of both components. Such an activity is precisely what has become increasingly rare in the Islamic educational tradition in Java. In most cases, students finish their studies at one *pesantren.* While in some cases, students still move from place to place, nevertheless, they do so to advance from one *pesantren* to another (Dhofier 2011). In the case of most Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs, religious education has become even more detached from the localities, in that education in Java is primarily concerned with preparing students to go to Ḥaḍramawt or Mecca where what is posited to be the authoritative knowledge of the *sunna* can be found. Consequently, Prophetic *sunna*

becomes increasingly detached, objectified, and estranged from the dialogical entanglements with the sociocultural particularities that make up a *jamāʿa*.

Genealogical Adoption

It is related that when the caliph ʿUmar b. Khaṭṭāb appointed ʿArjafa b. Harthama as the leader of the Bajīla tribe, the tribesmen rejected the nomination, saying that he was not from among the tribe, but someone who had come from outside and attached himself to them. When the caliph asked ʿArjafa regarding this, the latter responded that what the tribesmen said was true. ʿArjafa came from the ʿAzd tribe. He had shed blood among his people, and consequently joined the Bajīla. Recounted by the great Arab historian Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), this story illustrates

> how ʿArjafah had come to mix with the Bajīlah, had become of their skin, and was known as one having the same descent as they, to the extent that he could eventually become a candidate for leadership over them, (and would have) had someone not remembered the genealogical ramifications (Ibn Khaldūn 1967: I, 268).

What Ibn Khaldūn described is an old tribal mechanism whereby someone becomes attached to people of another descent — usually in a client-master framework — and consequently is counted as one of them. Such an attached person came to enjoy things that result from common descent, including affection and rights, as well as obligations. The Prophet himself was reported to say, in regards to the tribe-less Salmān the Persian, that "Salmān is from us (*minnā*) the people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*)." At the same time, however, the Prophet forbade his servant and adopted son Zayd b. Ḥāritha from calling himself Zayd the son of Muḥammad. Scholars have explained how while the Prophet did adopt Zayd, he did not want lineages to become convoluted. What these cases point to is the intricacies surrounding what I call *genealogical adoption*.

Similar to the tribal genealogical adoption, the master-disciple (*murshid-murīd*) relationship as practiced among the Sufis also involves genealogical adoption, although in this case it pertains to spiritual genealogy (*silsila*) rather than lineage (*nasab*). Being a disciple of a Sufi master involves renunciation of former ties and surrendering oneself to the master. In exchange for the disciple's loyalty and attachment, the shaykh provides him with support, protection (Hammoudi 1997: 96-7), and of course, a *silsila*. Yet, the line between *silsila* and *nasab* often intersects and creates tension precisely because genealogy functions as an ethical framework. Having a parallel genealogy may invoke questions regarding the primary locus of the disciple's ethical responsibility. What should the disciple do when the demands of a teacher conflict with those of the parents? Indeed candid competition between a disciple's parents and spiritual master is quite common (Bashir 2011: 153).[147] Oftentimes, a disciple may feel conflicted about his ethical obligation towards his parents and master, as the following story told by Habib Luthfi makes clear:

> Once, when I visited Habib Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ in Tempel [Yogyakarta], he told me to stay and forbade me from leaving. I felt really awful, as at the time I was the sole breadwinner of the family and my mother's livelihood depended on me. I stayed for ten days with Habib Aḥmad and as a result I could not work. You see, I was selling *sarongs* at the time, which meant that I had to bring them to different markets and try selling them. Another week went by and Habib Aḥmad still refused to grant me leave. I was constantly thinking of my mother. How is she going to eat next week? The next day, Habib Aḥmad called me and told me to return to my mother. On the one hand I was relieved, but on the other hand, I did not have any money with me as I still had my

[147] One example of this is the case involving a student of Habib Luthfi. Fidri is a young Jakartan professional who has been a disciple of Habib Luthfi since he was fourteen years old. For a few years, Fidri's father — who is also a professional working for the state oil company (Pertamina) — refused to permit Fidri from meeting Habib Luthfi as in his view, his son was spending more time with a stranger than with his own family. The father was also worried that Fidri would turn out to become a *kyai* rather than a modern professional. This put Fidri in a difficult position, and Habib Luthfi told him to obey his father. Fidri would only go to see Habib Luthfi when his father was traveling, or when Habib Luthfi visited Semarang, where Fidri's family was staying. The father finally met Habib Luthfi years later, when Fidri had become a successful professional working for a foreign oil company. He apologized to Habib Luthfi for not having an open mind and thanked him for providing his son with a proper religious education. To this day, Fidri and his parents regularly visit Habib Luthfi.

> *sarongs* that I was supposed to sell at Beringharjo market [in Yogyakarta]. But before leaving, Habib Aḥmad gave me Rp. 100,000 which in the late seventies was a significant sum. He told me, "no need to sell the *sarong*, just go back to your mother" (*wes ora usah dodolan sarung*, *muleh ae reng nggon mbokmu*).

While in this particular case, the master resolved the disciple's conflicting ethical obligation, such an easy resolution is not always the case.

The line between *silsila* and *nasab* also intersects and becomes blurred in the case of a "family *ṭarīqa*," like the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* (Trimingham 1971: 16). The *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* is among the few *ṭarīqas*, in which *silsila* and *nasab* coalesced (Alatas 1997: 31). Most Bā ʿAlawī scholars do not initiate Bā ʿAlawī children into the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* due to the assumption that they are born into the *ṭarīqa* just as they are born into the lineage. As a result, adoption of another *silsila* by a Bā ʿAlawī may be seen as a betrayal of one's lineal identity. Stories exchanged in informal conversations among Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs or recounted in sermons during an exclusive Bā ʿAlawī gathering discourage them from following other *ṭarīqas* by presenting it as an act that would incur the anger of the ancestors. One popular anecdote tells the arrival in Ḥaḍramawt of a Sufi preacher from Samarkand, who attempted to attract the Bā ʿAlawīs to his *ṭarīqa*. In his dream, the preacher encountered the spirit of the founder of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, who indignantly ordered the preacher to leave *his children* alone. Another story presents the bleak eschatological future of a Bā ʿAlawī who entered another *ṭarīqa.*

> There was once a Bā ʿAlawī who entered another Sufi *ṭarīqa* and became attached to it. One night, he dreamt that he found himself in the Day of Resurrection, when humankind gather to await divine verdict. He saw how every human went and sought solace in their respective group. So he went to those gathering under the banner of the *ṭarīqa* that he had joined. The masters of that *ṭarīqa*, however, told him that there is no place for him there as he belongs to the Bā ʿAlawīs. So he looked for those who were gathering under

> the banner of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. When he found them, the masters of the *ṭarīqa* told him to leave, saying "you were once our children, but you have rejected us and joined another family". The man was thus left by himself with no group to provide support.

Both anecdotes conflate *silsilā* with *nasab*, which explains why Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs easily dismiss as vagabonds those among them who have joined other *ṭarīqas*. The poetic verses of the Bā ʿAlawī luminary ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1915) repeatedly evoked by Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī scholars in their sermons capture the importance of synchronizing *silsilā* and *nasab* as well as genealogy and mobility:

> Whoever does not tread (*salak*) the path (*ṭarīqa*) of his family
> will become confused and lost
> O offshoots (*furūʿ*) of the Prophet, trudge and emulate
> on the straight path (*al-ṭarīq*) and avoid innovations (*al-ibtidāʿ*)
> …
> Follow step by step in action and in refrain (*al-imtināʿ*)
> Through your predecessors you will gain countless benefits
> They are the masters, how benevolent and honorable is their character
> You will not find disagreements and conflicts in their *ṭarīqa*

The imperative to synchronize mobility and genealogy, or to tread the spiritual path of the family, is the primary reason why most young Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs are sent to study under Bā ʿAlawī teachers — whether in Indonesia or Arabia —and not to *pesantrens* headed by Javanese *kyais*.

Nevertheless, joining another *ṭarīqa* and adopting another *silsila* was precisely what Habib Luthfi accomplished. Habib Luthfi's final destination in his wandering days was the village of Kedungparuk, Purwokerto, the home of the Khālidī-Naqshabandī *murshid* Shaykh Abdul Malik b. Muḥammad Ilyas (d. 1980). The Khālidī-Naqshabandīyya is a 'suborder' of the *Ṭarīqa Naqshabandiyya* instituted by an Ottoman Sheikh of Kurdish origin, Khālid al-Shahrazūrī (d. 1242/1827), who studied with the Naqshabandī shaykh ʿAbdallāh Dihlawī in India before returning to the Ottoman lands. Driven by his desire to invigorate Islam in the face of the

Ottoman's decline, Khālid introduced three additional ritual practices into the established Naqshabandī spiritual discipline that turned his circle into a systematic and centralized socioreligious movement. These consisted of

> the *khalwa arba'iniyya*, a concentrated seclusion of forty days which allowed him to authorize with great speed deputies to spread his message; the *rabita,* a mystical binding to his image designed to centralize their activity under his leadership' and *ghalq al-bab***,** the closing of the door during the *dhikr* ceremony, which helped him to stress the uniqueness of his path (Weissman 2001: 305-6).

Within a few years, the Khālidī-Naqshabandīyya spread all over the Ottoman lands and became a significant social force both among the elites and the masses (Abu-Manneh 1982; Zelkina 1999; Weisman 2001).

The Khālidī-Naqshabandīyya became widespread in Java beginning in the 1850s with the returns of Javanese pilgrims who had been initiated into the *ṭarīqa* by the Khalīdī *murshid* of Mecca, Sulaymān Zuhdī (Bruinessen 1992; Laffan 2011). Among Zuhdī's pupils was Shaykh Abdul Malik's father, Muhammad Ilyas.[148] Upon returning from Mecca, Ilyas established a *pesantren* in Sukaraja, Central Java, where he assembled his own *jamāʿa* and began to initiate numerous followers into the *ṭarīqa* (Bruinessen 1992: 164). His son Abdul Malik studied in Mecca for fifteen years where he was initiated into the Khālidī-Naqshabandīyya and the Shadhilīya *ṭarīqas*. Upon his return to Java, Abdul Malik succeeded his father and inherited his *jamāʿa*. Subsequently, he established himself in the village of Kedungparuk, Purwokerto (Central Java). Shaykh Abdul Malik combined the teachings and litanies of the Khālidī-Naqshabandīyya and the Shādhilīya that he had received from his teachers, creating his own 'suborder' which he

[148] Thus Habib Luthfi's Khālidī-Naqshabandī *silsilā* reads:

> Habib Muhammad Luthfi b. Ali bin Yahya — Shaykh Abdul Malik — Shaykh Muḥammad Ilyās b. Alī — Sayyid Sulaymān al-Zuhdī — Sulaymān al-Quraymī — Sayyid ʿAbdallāh Affandī — Mawlānā Khālid al-Shahrazurī. (Bin Yahya 2012: 359).

called *Ṭarīqa Naqshabandiyya-Khālidiyya-Shādhiliyya* (NKS). By following the Khālidī method of swift induction, Shaykh Abdul Malik was able to rapidly produce deputies (*badal*), who can lead NKS rituals in different villages.

As a social assemblage, the NKS *ṭarīqa* of Kedungparuk is organized in a hierarchical form. The *ṭarīqa* revolves around one *murshid* who was appointed by the previous *murshid,* thus Shaykh Abdul Malik was nominated by his father, who in turn was nominated by Sulaymān Zuhdī. Only the *murshid* is authorized to initiate people into the *ṭarīqa*. The *jamāʿa* itself — or *murīds* to use the technical term adopted in the *ṭarīqa* circle — can generally be distinguished into two kinds: those who study with the *murshid* intimately, and those who only attend the weekly *dhikr* session. Those who study with the *murshid* are usually people who came to Kedungparuk from different places in Java to live with the shaykh. After performing the forty days seclusion (*khalwa*), they are appointed as the deputies (*badal*) of the *murshid,* and are sent back to their places of origin. While a deputy is given the permission to initiate people into the *ṭarīqa*, they can only do so under the name of the *murshid*. Thus when they initiate people, they ask them to swear an oath of allegiance to the *murshid* and not to themselves. Even if one is initiated into a *tarīqa* by a deputy, only the name of the *murshid* is written in his/her *silsila*. The deputies are given the task to initiate as many people as they can, and to set up and lead weekly *dhikr* sessions in their localities. A few times a year, during Islamic holidays, the deputies bring their respective *jamāʿas* to see the *murshid*. The *murshid* also travels to visit the *jamāʿas* that have been assembled by his deputies.

To aid his deputies in assembling their *jamāʿas*, Shaykh Abdul Malik composed a booklet entitled *al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl li tashīl al-wuṣūl* (Guarding the Fundamentals to Assist the

Communion). The booklet begins with a *tawassul,* a supplication for blessing on behalf of the Prophet, his companions and families, and continues to lists the names of individuals who make up Shaykh Abdul Malik's Naqshabandī and Shadhilī *silsilas*. The text instructs the readers to recite the *fātiḥa* (the first *sūra* of the Qurʾān) for the spirits of those who are named while requesting them to intercede on the reader's behalf to God. Naming the individuals that make of one's *silsilā* all the way back to the Prophet helps to cement one's genealogical identity. As a gateway to a ritual session, the *tawassul* serves to anchor the ritual in a temporal framework that connects it to the Prophetic *sunna,* while positing the *silsilā* as the secure and authoritative channel through which Prophetic *sunna* is transmitted to the *jamāʿa*.

The bulk of the booklet consists of Qurʾānic verses and Prophetic prayers and invocations, some of which are to be recited multiple times. As an anthology organized in a specific ordering, the text constitutes the prescribed *dhikr* of the NKS *ṭarīqa* of Kedungparuk. In other words, while most of the specific verses and prayers are found in other anthologies, and even recited by Muslims who do not belong to a *ṭarīqa*, what gives this anthology its specific NKS identity is the opening *tawassul,* i.e. its genealogical transmission, and its particular ordering, including the specific numbers in which a Prophetic invocation should be recited. Similar to the Ḥaddādian *rātib* (see chapter 2), *ṭarīqa dhikr* manual like *al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl* is therefore, a particular articulation of the Prophetic *sunna* projected as authoritative through the *silsilā* of the *ṭarīqa*. Such a booklet in turn enables the deputies of the *murshid* to set up and lead their own NKS *dhikr* in their localities.
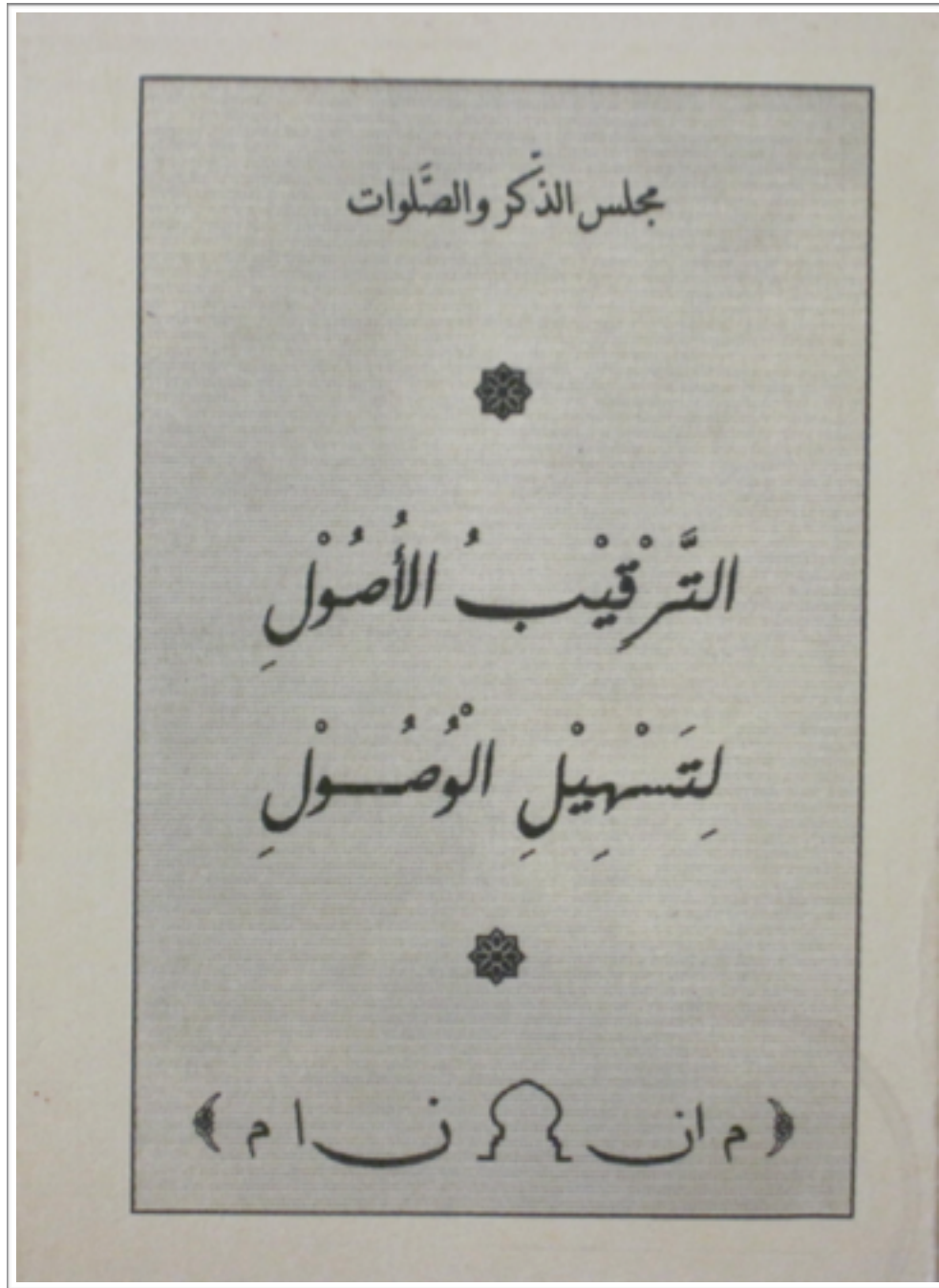
Figure 5.1: ***al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl li tashīl al-wuṣūl***

Another text authored by Shaykh Abdul Malik is *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid li ahl al-tawḥīd* (The Key to the Aspirations of the People of Unicity). This text is a compilation of various poetically-composed salutations to the Prophet Muḥammad (*ṣalawāt*) written by Muslim

scholars and saints that Shaykh Abdul Malik had received from his teachers in Java and the Hejaz. Unlike the first text, the *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid* is not recited collectively as part of a *dhikr* session. Rather, it is meant for voluntary individual recitation for whoever wishes to do so. Both booklets are sold cheaply at Shaykh Abdul Malik's house and mosque in Kedungparuk where I was able to get hold of them.

المفتاح المقاصد لأهل التوحيد
فى الصلاة على باب الله الحميد المجيد
سيدنا محمد الفاتح لجميع الشدائد

ترتيب

العارف بالله كياهى
عبد المالك بن محمد الياس
النقشبندى الخالدى الشاذلى

طبع بمطبعة
فوندوك فسانترين بنى مالك فوروكرطا

Figure 5.2: ***al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid li ahl al-tawḥīd***

Habib Luthfi spent a total of twelve years in the company of Shaykh Abdul Malik. Eight years were spent in *mulāzama,* meaning keeping the company of, and not leaving, the Shaykh.[149] At the end of the eighth year, the Shaykh instructed Habib Luthfi to get married, and so he returned to Pekalongan to marry a close relative, Syarifah Salmah bin Yaḥyā, chosen by his mother. After being married, Habib Luthfi continued to visit Shaykh Abdul Malik on a regular basis. Such a practice is known as *taraddud*.[150] Senior villagers of Kedungparuk whom I talked to during my visit, recalled how Habib Luthfi was "the golden boy" (*anak emas*) of Shaykh Abdul Malik. They recalled how he was always at the Shaykh's side, and that the Shaykh would never travel without Habib Luthfi. Some told me that the relationship between Shaykh Abdul Malik and Habib Luthfi was like a father and a son, while others described it like a grandfather and a grandson. Whenever Shaykh Abdul Malik held a gathering, he would always ask Habib Luthfi to deliver the sermon. One of the villagers told me how it was clear to all of the Shaykh's followers that the Shaykh was grooming Habib Luthfi to be his successor. When I visited Shaykh Abdul Malik's house, his grandson took me to a small room where, under the Shaykh's instruction, Habib Luthfi performed the ritual of concentrated seclusion (*khalwa*) for four years.

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[149] *Mulāzama* comes from the word *lāzama* meaning "he kept, confined himself, clave, clung, or held fast, to him" and refers to "the continuous physical propinquity of a follower to a powerful man" (Chamberlain 1994: 118).

[150] Whereas "*mulāzama* implied constant propinquity, *taraddud* meant regular contact" (Chamberlain 1994: 118-9).
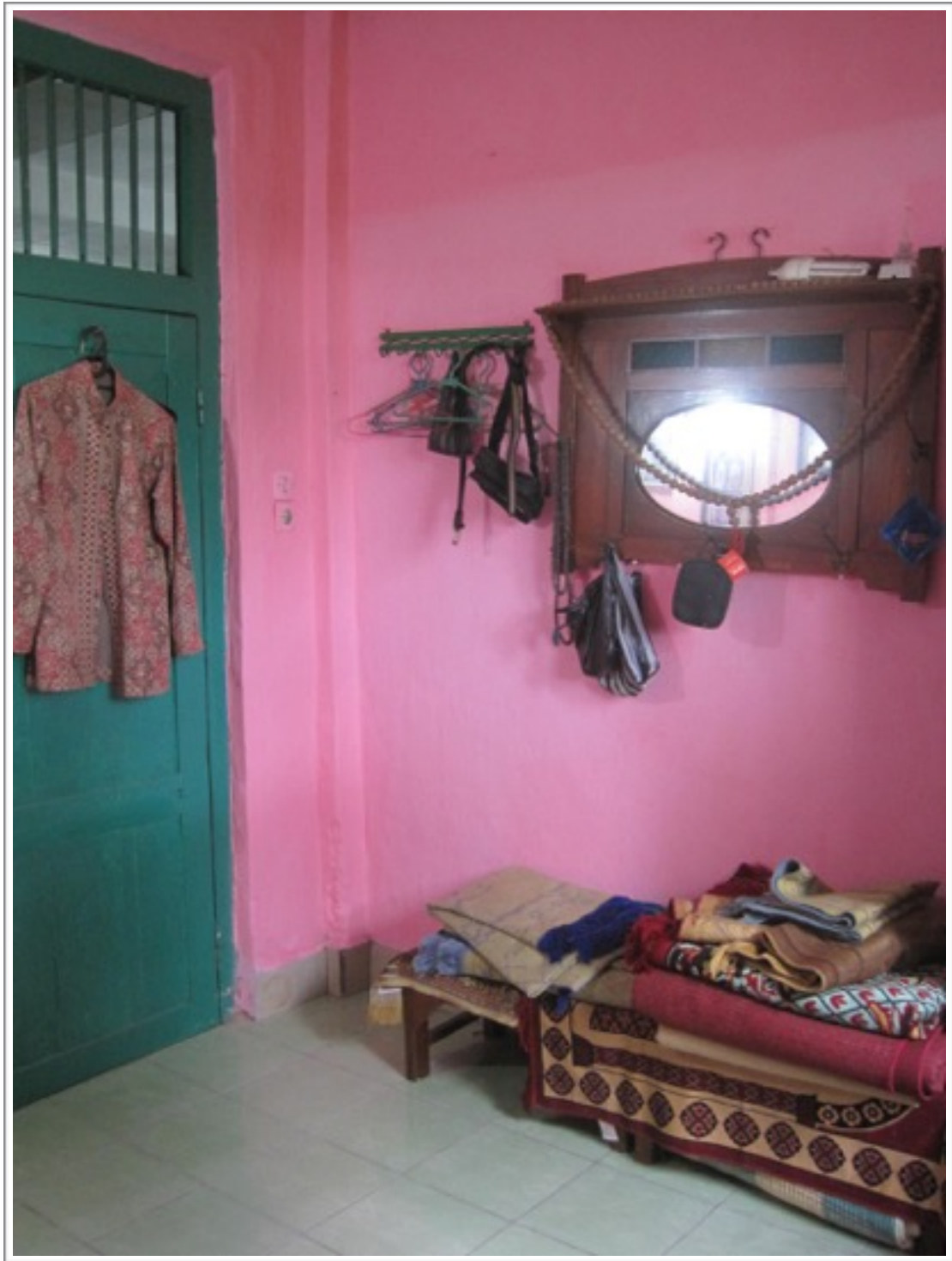
Figure 5.3: The chamber of ritual seclusion in Kedungparuk, Central Java, where Habib Luthfi performed the ritual of concentrated seclusion.

Shortly before his death, Shaykh Abdul Malik formally appointed Habib Luthfi as a *murshid* of the NKS *ṭarīqa.* The ninety-nine year old Shaykh instructed his family and followers to pledge their allegiance to Habib Luthfi. While Shaykh Abdul Malik appointed his eldest grandson to continue and lead the rituals in Kedungparuk and initiate people into the *ṭarīqa*, he specified that they do so under the name of Habib Luthfi. In other words, Shaykh Abdul Malik's grandson was appointed as a deputy of Habib Luthfi. When Shaykh Abdul Malik passed away in 1980, Habib Luthfi became the sole *murshid* of the NKS *ṭarīqa*. From his Shaykh, he inherited a considerably expansive *jamāʿa* that had been assembled and maintained for more than a century. Those who had pledged their allegiance to Shaykh Abdul Malik, renewed their allegiance to Habib Luthfi.[151]

Genealogical adoption thus enabled Habib Luthfi to become the leader of an established social assemblage with multiple branches in different localities. Unlike the *manṣab* in Pekalongan, Habib Luthfi was not born to a father who could bequeath him with a *jamāʿa.* By diverging from the genealogically-directed mobility, however, Habib Luthfi opened himself for genealogical adoption by other fathers who had their own *jamāʿas*. In his official biography, Habib Luthfi describes how he was initiated into several other *ṭarīqas*, including the Qādiriyya-Naqshabandiyya, the ʿAlawiyya, and the Tijāniyya. Through the practice of *lelono*, Habib Luthfi became — to rephrase Pramoedya Ananta Toer — a child of all shaykhs. Adopting a Bā ʿAlawī *sayyid* can also become a source of pride for the Javanese *kyais,* as in a place like Java, it implies

[151] Unlike the internal conflicts that occurred in many *ṭarīqas* in Java following the death of a *murshid*, the succession of the NKS *ṭarīqa* leadership went smoothly. Perhaps this was due to the fact that Shaykh Abdul Malik did not have a son. Another reason was both Shaykh Abdul Malik and Habib Luthfi left the control of Kedungparuk to the children of the Shaykh's daughters. Thus, votive offerings and monetary gifts brought to the house and grave of Shaykh Abdul Malik, as well as the profit accrued from the selling of the *ṭarīqa* booklets, were left to the Shaykh's family. In many cases, internal contestations over the succession of a *murshid*, are due to the control of resources and income.

a role-reversal. It is highly uncommon for a Bā ʿAlawī to study under a Javanese *kyai*. In contrast, studying under a Bā ʿAlawī scholar allowed a *kyai* — particularly those who did not come from an illustrious lineage — to be adopted into the Bā ʿAlawī *silsila*, like Salmān the Persian or Zayd b. Ḥāritha who were adopted by the Prophet. Perhaps genealogical adoption was what attracted Javanese pilgrims in Mecca to pledge allegiance to different *ṭarīqas,* precisely because in a place like Java, genealogy operates ideologically as a recognizable basis of religious authority, allowing others to perceive its bearer as a credible *connector*. For a *kyai* to adopt a Bā ʿAlawī *sayyid* — known for both their *nasab* and *silsilā* — can thus be a source of pride that may have social implications that are recognizable to other Muslims, and may lead to the strengthening of the *kyai*'s prestige. Nevertheless genealogical adoption that had allowed Habib Luthfi to become a leader of a mature *jamāʿa* came with a price, particularly when it was time to return to the coastal city of Pekalongan.

Return to Nyoyontaan

When Habib Luthfi finally returned to Pekalongan, he had to face a society that — unlike Kedungparuk — was not predisposed towards him. The Bā ʿAlawīs were under the shadow of the *manṣab*. The *kyais* — most of whom were second or third generation scholars — were preoccupied with attending to their own *jamāʿas*. There was not much room to maneuver, let alone to establish a *jamāʿa*, without offending other interested actors. People close to Habib Luthfi told me how he used to keep a low profile in Pekalongan. Although he was a *murshid* with a large following outside of Pekalongan, Habib Luthfi carried himself like a common man, dressed in jeans, t-shirt, and leather jacket, whilst carrying his guitar. He began to engage the Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarter, and sat in the gatherings of the *manṣab*. With time, however, many

began to notice that at certain times, the dandy young man known to his friends as Upik, would receive a truck-load of guests coming from the villages of south-central Java. One Bā ʿAlawī, friend of Habib Luthfi, recalled those days:

> Both Upik and I are from Pekalongan and yet we did not know each other before the early eighties. That was because I lived in the Arab quarter and he lived in Nyoyontaan, so we did not play together. Plus, he was away for a long time, God knows (*wallāhu aʿlam*) where he went. I got to know him in the early eighties. We used to spend a lot of time together. I used to go with him and Salmah [Habib Luthfi's wife] to the cinema. He loved Charles Bronson's films. He used to play the guitar and I used to sing. Those days were nice. But then I noticed that every now and then, there would be a lot of people from the villages at his house. The house was very small and those guests would sit outside the house. And I also noticed that they brought bottles of water and asked him to read (*baca-baca*) onto the water, just like what we always see at al-Rawḍa [the *manṣab*'s mosque]. When I asked Upik about it, he just smiled and said that they were his old friends. Gradually I learnt that he was actually a *murshid* of a *ṭarīqa*. That is why, he was constantly traveling. Again, God knows where he went.

While Habib Luthfi kept a low profile in Pekalongan, he resumed his role as a *murshid* by regularly visiting his *jamāʿas* in different villages across Java. At the same time, his reputation as a preacher, who speaks the language of the people, was rising outside of Pekalongan, and hence, his constant travels.

Two controversies sparked off Habib Luthfi's initial notoriety in Pekalongan. The first concerned a new edition of Shaykh Abdul Malik's anthology of salutation to the Prophet (*ṣalawāt*), the *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid,* that includes an epilogue by Habib Luthfi. Written in Arabic, the epilogue begins by discussing the merits of *ṣalawāt*, but moves to a personal testimony regarding the value of *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid*:

> On the afternoon of Sunday 17 Rabīʿ II 1397 [April 6 1977] I was sitting in the house of the brother, Muhammad Sutiman in the village of Jenggot. With me was our teacher, the knower of Allāh (*al-ʿārif billāh*), Abdul Malik and several other brothers-in-Allāh, including Haji Abdul Adhim b. Abdul Qadir and the host, Muhammad Sutiman. The Shaykh was reciting the *ṣalawāt* that he had compiled, entitled *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid,* and we were listening to it.

> During the recitation, I suddenly witnessed the Master of the Sharīʿa (*ṣāḥib al-sharīʿa*) may peace and blessing be upon him. He was sitting on a throne, situated on a high stage. On his right was our master Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq and the Imam ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, may Allāh be pleased with them both. Next to them were five of the ten companions who had been promised with heaven (*khamsa min al-ṣaḥāba al-ʿashra al-mubashshara bi-l-janna*). In his right was our master ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and our master Uthmān b. ʿAffān, may Allāh be pleased with them both. Next to them were five of the ten companions who had been promised with heaven. The Shaykh and I were standing in front of the Prophet may peace and blessing be upon him. This was due to the blessing of the *ṣalawāt al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid* written by Shaykh Abdul Malik (Abdul Malik n.d.: 73-4).

The epilogue is signed by Habib Luthfi. Below his signature is a small paragraph, also in Arabic, written and signed by Abdul Adhim b. Abdul Qadir, a resident of Buaran, Pekalongan that says:

> It should be known that this knowing Habib (*al-ḥabīb al-ʿārif*), Muḥammad Luṭfī b. ʿAlī b. Hāshim b. ʿUmar b. Ṭāhā bin Yaḥyā Bā ʿAlawī, has been blessed with many visions (*kathīr al-ruʾya*) of the Prophet, may peace and blessing be upon him, both in waking and sleeping states (*yaqẓatan wa manāman*).

The circulation of the new edition of the *al-Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid* sparked a controversy in Pekalongan. Initially, a senior *kyai* got hold of a copy and began duplicating the epilogue and sending it to other *kyais*. They met to discuss the issue and agreed to reject the validity of the testimony and sent a written warning to Habib Luthfi. At issue is the claim of sainthood coming from a relatively young and unknown person. While Habib Luthfi clearly states that the vision was the result of reciting Shaykh Abdul Malik's anthology, and he credited his teacher for this, yet the only person in the room who witnessed the vision was Habib Luthfi (and perhaps Shaykh Abdul Malik, although it is unclear from the text). Implicit in his testimony of the merit of the *ṣalawāt* anthology is an indirect claim of his own spiritual station. In many parts of the Muslim world, the ability to see the Prophet either in dream or in waking state can be understood to be synonymous with sainthood (Katz 1996; Felek & Knysh 2012; Sirriyeh 2015). It was this implicit claim to sainthood — further underscored in the appended statement of Abdul Adhim of

Buaran — was what angered the senior *kyais.* In their view, such a public claim can lead to the proliferation of similar claims, which in turn may cause widespread confusion.

The second controversy concerned Habib Luthfi's involvement with the ruling political party Golongan Karya (Golkar).[152] In the early seventies, the government instituted the Majelis Dakwah Islamiyah (Islamic Mission Council, MDI). Set up as a youth organization with the aim to promote Islamization at the local level, the MDI became closely linked to Golkar and actively campaigned on behalf of the party during the general elections (Ricklefs 2012: 156). For most traditionalist *kyais* — particularly those who were affiliated with NU — the activities of MDI were perceived as a direct threat to their own sphere of influence. Backed by the government and local military apparatus, MDI organized Islamic activities in both urban and rural areas without heeding the authority of local *kyais.* The organization actively supported *kyais* who joined its campaigns and disregarded the social standing of those who refused to do so. Despite the efforts of uncooperative *kyais* to discourage their *jamāʿas* from attending events organized by MDI, many chose to do so, particularly when the organization was able to bring in popular scholars and celebrities from Jakarta. Through MDI and its affiliated preachers and scholars, the state involved itself in shaping the religious lives of its citizens and intruded into the traditional domain of village and neighborhood-based *kyais*. This resulted in fierce competition over *jamāʿas*. The MDI also became an effective vehicle for new and less-influential scholars to assemble or strengthen their *jamāʿa,* and to woo members of other *jamāʿas* to join their camps.

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[152] From the early 1970s, the government has been active in promoting Islamization programs at grass-root level. Such programs were devised to bring village-based *kyais,* most of whom were more predisposed towards the Islamic political party — the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) —, into the orbit of the regime, as well as to purge the society from what the government saw as the remnants of the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia, PKI). In 1971, the government established the Religious Mentality Promotion Project (Proyek Pembinaan Mental Agama, P2A) aimed to strengthen public religiosity. Muslims scholars from both the traditionalist Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the modernist Muhammadiyah were invited to take part (Ricklefs 2012: 156).

With the financial support of the government and the backing of the local state apparatuses, these scholars were able to build their own mosques and *pesantrens,* organize events, and print booklets and pamphlets in their effort to assemble and expand their regime-friendly *jamaʿās*.

A few years after his return to Pekalongan, Habib Luthfi joined MDI and was subsequently appointed as the advisor for Islamic affairs to the local branch of Golkar. This involvement allowed him to establish connections with the leading members of the local government, including the mayor, city councilors, the police chief, and the commander of the district military command (KODIM). Habib Luthfi's closeness to the military, however, began in Kedungparuk during his days with Shaykh Abdul Malik, who was also known to have many students in active military duty. His formal entry into Golkar allowed Habib Luthfi to gain not only financial resources for organizing Islamic events, but also the protection and backing of the local government. At the same time, it significantly assisted his maneuvers in Pekalongan. It was during this time that Habib Luthfi began to organize his own annual *mawlid* (the birth of the Prophet) celebration. Blocked by one basis for authority, Habib Luthfi was able to circumvent it by drawing on another. Financial support and protection from the local government allowed him to host the annual event that drew the participation of all of his NKS deputies and their *jamāʿas* from the villages of South-Central Java. Previously the annual *mawlid* of the NKS *ṭarīqa* was staged in Kedungparuk — at the mosque of Shaykh Abdul Malik —, and Habib Luthfi himself had to travel there for the occasion. From the mid 1980s, Habib Luthfi was able to host his own *mawlid,* thereby marking an important step in the relocation of the center of the NKS *ṭarīqa* from Kedungparuk to Nyoyontaan.

Habib Luthfi's formal entry into Golkar further angered the *kyais* of Pekalongan, who were already irritated by his previous claim to spiritual vision. None of the traditionalist *kyais* of Pekalongan were willing to associate themselves with Habib Luthfi, and forbade their *jamāʿa* from attending Habib Luthfi's *mawlid*. One of the senior *kyais* of Pekalongan and an active member of the PPP, *kyai* Tahir of Buaran (d. 2005) delivered a speech in front of an assembly of local NU *kyais* warning his fellow scholars from associating with Habib Luthfi. One elderly NU *kyai* recounted to me parts of *kyai* Tahir's speech:

> Yes Habib Luthfi is a *habib*. He is the offspring of the Prophet (*putro wayahe kanjeng nabi*). And we need to respect that. But, at this moment, he is not in the condition of ritual purity, he is akin to a woman during menstruation. Just as we do not touch our wives during their menstrual cycles, we should not touch Habib Luthfi. God willing (*insha Allah*) soon his menstrual cycle will come to an end, and we can embrace him again. For the time being, however, we should not do so.

Unlike most of the traditionalist *kyais,* the *manṣab,* ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās (d.1992) remained neutral. He did not join any political parties, and at the same time he was careful in maintaining cordial relationship with the local government. Indeed he needed the support of the local government, knowing full well that without its permission, he would not be able to stage the *ḥawl* (annual commemoration) of his saintly father.

In the lead up to the 1987 general election, the Golkar leadership of Pekalongan attempted to coerce the *manṣab* into proclaiming his support for the party by requesting him to recite the concluding supplication during the political rally. This put the *manṣab* in a difficult position as agreeing to do so would anger the local *kyais.* Declining the request, however, could lead to serious repercussion, such as the banning of the *ḥawl.* During this impasse, the *manṣab* requested the help of Habib Luthfi who in turn was able to intercede on his behalf. The party

withdrew the invitation and left the aging *manṣab* alone as long as he did not make any appearance at a PPP rally. Since then, a strong bond was established between the *manṣab* and Habib Luthfi. Unlike the traditionalist *kyais*, the *manṣab* began attending Habib Luthfi's annual *mawlid* and consequently, other Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarters followed suit.

Old Genealogy, New Mobility

By the early 1990s, Habib Luthfi had secured his own niche in Pekalongan. The two aforementioned controversies had enabled his name and presence to be recognized — albeit notoriously — by the residents of Pekalongan. His involvement with Golkar allowed him to gain the support and protection of the local government that in turn facilitated his work in maintaining and expanding his *jamāʿa.* Of particular importance was his ability to host his own annual *mawlid*, marking the emergence of Nyoyontaan as another center of the NKS *ṭarīqa* aside from Kedungparuk. While his involvement with Golkar made him into an enemy of the traditionalist *kyais* of Pekalongan, it also enabled him to gain an important ally: the *manṣab*.

This, however, did not mean that his religious authority was accepted by the Bā ʿAlawīs. Most Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan remained dismissive of Habib Luthfi despite his closeness with the *manṣab*. Such an attitude was due to several reasons. First, Habib Luthfi came from a Bā ʿAlawī *priyayi* family, and hence, less-authentic than the Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarters. For the Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarters, the bin Yaḥyā family was considered a second-class *sayyid* family. Secondly, Habib Luthfi did not study under Bā ʿAlawī scholars and adopted a different spiritual genealogy. To make it worse, his adopted *silsilā* was that of the Khālidī-Naqshabandiyya, which had been severely criticized by many Ḥaddādian Bā ʿAlawī scholars for

its tendency to initiate people into the *ṭarīqa* without the prerequisite of learning Islamic law. [153] Committed to the Ḥaddādian paradigm, most Bā ʿAlawī in Pekalongan think that the *ṭarīqa* framework that Habib Luthfi propagated is superfluous. In their view, it is sufficient to stick to learning the legal *mukhtaṣars* (abridgement) and the simplified *ʿaqāʾid* (creed), and recite the *rātib* of al-Ḥaddād and al-ʿAṭṭās, without having to pledge any allegiance to a *murshid.*

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the deep tension between Habib Luthfi and the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan was diverted with the emergence of a Shiʿī *jamāʿa* among the Bā ʿAlawī of Pekalongan. The 1979 Iranian revolution had sparked a significantly widespread interest in Shi'īsm among the Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs. In the 1970s and 1980s several young Bā ʿAlawīs flocked the *hawze* (seminary) of Iran. Upon return, they disseminated Shiʿīsm to their fellow Bā ʿAlawīs and other Muslims. This was facilitated by the establishment of new scholarly connections between Iranian scholars and several Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Indonesia, including Hussein al-Habsyi of Bangil, the aforementioned teacher of the current *manṣab* of Pekalongan, Abdullah Bagir. Al-Habsyi was impressed with the Iranian revolution, and when in 1982 a delegation of Iranian scholars visited his *pesantren* (YAPI), he decided to cut off his connection with al-Māliki in Mecca and instead, began to send his students to Iran (Zulkifli 2004). Ten YAPI students were granted scholarship to study in Iran annually. Upon their return to Indonesia, these

[153] Habib Luthfi's adoptive *silsilā* connects him to the Meccan scholar Sulaymān Zuhdī who was responsible for initiating numerous Javanese pilgrims into the *ṭarīqa*. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a Bā ʿAlawī scholar and self-proclaimed *mufti* of Batavia, Uthmān b. ʿAbdallāh bin Yaḥyā (d. 1914) criticized Zuhdī and his Javanese pupils for disseminating the *ṭarīqa* among the common people (Bruinessen 1992: 109-110; Laffan 2011: 58-60; Kaptein 2014: 201-203). To the present day, Uthmān's criticism of the Khālidī-Naqshabandiyya were used by the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan to criticize Habib Luthfi. Not only did Habib Luthfi adopted another *ṭarīqa*, but he chose one that had been criticized by a Bā ʿAlawī scholar whose eminence and authority is generally recognized by Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī.

students became the proponents of Shiʿīsm, establishing diverse Shiʿī educational institutions in different parts of the country.[154]

Among those who graduated from Iran was Ahmad Baraqbah of Pekalongan, who in 1989 established his own *pesantren* al-Hadi in the Arab quarter. The *pesantren*'s curriculum was inspired by those used in the *hawze* of Iran. In fact, the general aim of the institution is to provide preparatory education to help its pupils gain admission into the *hawze* (Formichi 2015). From my conversation with Baraqbah, I gather that, aside from the success of the Iranian revolution, what drew him and his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs to Shiʿīsm was the way in which it positions the centrality of the *ahl al-bayt* (Prophet's family) as the living articulation of the Prophetic *sunna*. The Shiʿī Bā ʿAlawīs were highly critical of the Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections like the Bukhārī and Muslim, which in their view are replete with fabricated *hadīth.* In their eyes, Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections downplay the importance of the *ahl al-bayt*. In contrast, the Shiʿī Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan assert that one can only learn the Prophetic *sunna* from his family. The *ahl al-bayt* were the living embodiment and the legitimate articulators of the *sunna.* Shiʿīsm as taught and practiced in Iran, in turn, is posited as the authentic continuation of the teachings of the *ahl al-bayt,* thereby situating Iran as the primary destination for Islamic education.

Through his active proselytization, Baraqbah was able to win many converts from among his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs. Those who converted to Shiʿīsm stopped recognizing the *manṣab* as a credible religious authority and began to criticize the religious practice and rituals of the Bā

[154] Among them were Zahir Yahya of the al-Kautsar foundation in Malang, East Java; Miqdad of the *Pesantren* Darut Taqrib, Jepara, Central Java; Fathoni Hadi of the al-Hujjah Foundation in Jember, East Java; Muhammad Amin Sufyan of the Samudera Foundation in Surabaya, East Java; Husein Alkaff of the al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung, West Java; Herman al-Munthahhar of the Amirul Mukminin Foundation in Pontianak, West Kalimantan (Assegaf 2015). For more detailed discussions of the recent development of Shiʿīsm in Indonesia, see: Alatas 1999; Zulkifli 2004; Zulfikli 2013; Marcinkowski 2008; Formichi 2014; Formichi 2015; Assegaf 2015.

ʿAlawīs as deviating from the Prophetic *sunna* as taught by the *ahl al-bayt.* Baraqbah explained to me that the Bā ʿAlawīs were originally Shiʿī. They had to practice *taqīya* (religious dissimulation) for fear of their safety when they migrated from Iraq to the Ḥaḍramawt. Gradually, however, they forgot their true religious orientation. Baraqbah blamed the Bā ʿAlawī scholars of Ḥaḍramawt, including the *ṭarīqa*'s luminary, ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥaddād for the *sunnification* of the Bā ʿAlawīs. However, Baraqbah continued, the situation is changing:

> *Alḥamdulillāh,* with the help of modern technology and media Allāh guides us back to the original teachings of our ancestors. From television, we learnt of the great Islamic revolution in Iran, and our teacher *ustādh* Hussein [al-Ḥabashi] was able to read the signs (*ayat-ayat*) of Allāh, and began sending us to that blessed land. Iran is the land of Salmān, a companion most beloved to the Prophet. He said "Salmān is from us the family of the Prophet". The Prophet counted Salmān as his family, even though he was Persian. Now, we, the offsprings of the Prophet are being reconnected again to our grandfather through the Persians.

Note the similarity between Habib Luthfi and Baraqbah in that both were able to assemble their own *jamāʿas* through diverging mobility and adoptive genealogy. Traveling to Iran and studying under the Shiʿī scholars of Qum, enabled Baraqbah to be adopted into the *silsilā* of his Persian teachers. Such a genealogy, however, is presented not as foreign but as intimately connected to the Prophetic genealogy through the Prophet's adoption of Salmān the Persian. In other words, Baraqbah does not posit his adoption into the *silsilā* of his Persian teachers as a betrayal of his *nasab*. Rather, adopting Shiʿīsm was a form of "ancestral allegiance" (Formichi 2015:272). For Baraqbah, it was his Persian teachers who had been adopted into the Prophetic genealogy. For Baraqbah, the Sunnification of the Bā ʿAlawīs had broken the confluence of *nasab* and *silsilā.* Consequently, those with Prophetic *nasab* like him had to regain the Prophetic *silsilā* from the Persian scholars.

The growth of the Shiʿī *jamāʿa* among the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan created a rift that divided the Arab quarter of Pekalongan. The Shiʿī Bā ʿAlawīs revolved around Baraqbah and stopped paying their respect to the *manṣabate*. Similar conflict also occurred in other Arab quarters in Java. Many Bā ʿAlawī families were divided, including that of the *manṣab* of Pekalongan. Two of *manṣab* ʿAlī's children converted to Shiʿīsm and began to question the discursive and ritual regularity that the institution of the *manṣabate* ought to maintain. When *manṣab* ʿAlī passed away in 1992 and his eldest son Aḥmad took over, he was no longer the unitary spiritual leader of the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan. One result of this rift was the strengthening of the connection between Habib Luthfi and the Sunni Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarter. In the face of the growing Shiʿī *jamāʿa*, *ṭarīqa* affiliation ceased to become a decisive issue. Up to the mid-nineties, Habib Luthfi and Abdullah Bagir — who was to succeed his father Aḥmad as the third *manṣab* in 1999 — were working hand-in-hand to halt the spread of Shiʿīsm among the young Bā ʿAlawīs. They jointly organized classes on "the danger of Shiʿī deviations" (*bahaya kesesatan Syiah*) using the heresiology of medieval Sunni authorities like al-Shahrastānī (d. 548/1153) as its course of study. Such a cooperation, however, did not last long as we will see in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter begins with the establishment of the *Kanzus Shalawat* — that marked the emergence of a new center of Islamic authority in Pekalongan — and moves backward to trace the biographical becoming of Habib Luthfi bin Yahya. It argues that the case of Habib Luthfi points to the centrality of genealogy and mobility in the formation of Islamic religious authority and the assembling of a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*. Genealogy identifies the communicative channels

in the transmission of the *sunna* to the *jamāʿa*, while presenting its bearer as an authoritative *connector* between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Mobility enables actors to disseminate their own articulation of the *sunna* and establish *jamāʿas.* It allows actors to retrace their lineage or to become entangled with other genealogies.

For most Bā ʿAlawīs, genealogy and mobility ought to work in tandem. Genealogy directs mobility, imbuing it with ethical dimensions. The cases of Habib Luthfi and Ahmad Baraqbah, however, point to the divergence of mobility from the directive of genealogy, which in turn facilitates the adoption of actors into alternative genealogies and enables them to form their own *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas*. Divergent mobility and genealogical adoption thus serve as the foundation of a new religious authority. In the view of their fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, however, divergent mobility and adoptive genealogies constitute the grounds on which their religious authority ought to be rejected.

The next chapter looks at Habib Luthfi's projects following the establishment of the *Kanzus Shalawat.* As stated in this chapter, Habib Luthfi's ability to organize the annual *mawlid* for his *jamāʿa* marked the gradual shift in the center of the NKS *ṭarīqa* from Kedungparuk, Purwokerto to Nyoyontaan, Pekalongan. The inauguration of *Kanzus Shalawat* finalized this process. The next chapter thus looks at the processes that have led to the consolidation of his *jamāʿa* and the contestations that entail.

Chapter VI

Ordering a *Jamāʿa*

> But there is not any perfect attainment of an ideal order whereby the indefinite endurance of a society is secured. A society arises from disorder, where 'disorder' is defined by reference to the ideal for that society; the favourable background of a larger environment either itself decays, or ceases to favour the persistence of the society after some stage of growth: the society then ceases to reproduce its members, and finally after a stage of decay passes out of existence.
>
> -Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*

Idrus is a Javanese man in his early sixties who has been a follower of Habib Luthfi since the mid-1980s. At least once a month, he leaves his hometown of Pasuruan (East Java) and travels to Pekalongan to see his beloved *murshid*.[155] Oftentimes, Habib Luthfi asks Idrus to accompany him on his trips. Idrus recalls how traveling with Habib Luthfi has enabled him to visit different parts of the country, from the big cities to some rural areas. "I have seen with my own eyes how his *jamāʿa* gradually grows," Idrus told me:

> We used to travel to different villages using an old Toyota Hiace that Habib rented from a Chinese guy who lived near his house. It was a really uncomfortable car. But then again, he could not afford something better those days. But we were younger then and we used to joke a lot during those long trips. Habib has always been generous. Whenever he receives *amplop* [envelope, meaning monetary gift] after a speaking engagement, he

[155] I once asked Idrus why did he choose to become a disciple of Habib Luthfi rather than finding a Sufi teacher who live closer to his hometown. After all there are many Sufi *murshids* in East Java. Idrus explained to me that a relationship between a disciple and a *murshid* is determined by God. That is, often time, one lives next to the house of a Sufi *murshid* but one is not attracted to him. Instead, one finds one's teacher in a faraway place. Idrus told me that he became attracted to Habib Luthfi when he saw the Habib giving a talk in Pasuruan. At that very moment, he felt affectively drawn to him and began visiting Pekalongan to become more acquainted with the Habib. Idrus told me that he himself has been unable to explain what caused his attraction to Habib Luthfi.

> always shares it with me and our other traveling companions. Many times, he did not receive *amplop*. Some villages would give him fresh produce instead. They were peasants you know, they did not have much cash. I had never heard Habib Luthfi complain, although I knew that once we reached Pekalongan, he would have to borrow some cash to pay for the rented car and the driver.

Gradually, Idrus continues, Habib Luthfi's name became famous in many parts of Java. He received speaking invitations not only from villagers, but from mayors, regents, and district military commanders. "Even the *kejawen* villagers respect Habib Luthfi as he knows how to communicate with them, and through him they begin to learn more about Islam," Idrus explained.[156] He then relates an interesting story:

> Once, Habib was invited to speak at a village near Gresik [East Java]. After the event concluded, the *Kades* [*Kepala Desa*, village head] asked for his help. Apparently the village was divided over the identity of an old tomb. The *santris* claim that the tomb belongs to a Muslim saint. The *kejawen* on the other hand claim that the tomb belongs to a general of [the] Mataram [Sultanate]. Knowing that Habib Luthfi is a Sufi *murshid*, the *Kades* asked him whether it is possible to identify the tomb. Habib responded affirmatively (*mengiyakan*) and he asked the *Kades* to assemble the villagers from both camps. He then told them that he will try to identify the tomb by performing an all night *dhikr* at the tomb and ask Allāh's help. So Habib went to the tomb and stayed there all night. He sat in front of the tomb and chanted using his long prayer beads. The following morning, the villagers came to the tomb, eagerly waiting for the verdict. Habib then told the villagers that there is no need for disagreement as both camps are right. The tomb belongs to a saint who also holds the title of *adipati arya* [aristocratic title usually reserved for regents of the sultanate]. He was a commander of the Mataram army. He mentioned the Javanese name of the buried person, which I cannot recall. But after that moment, the feud between the villagers came to an end. The *santris* and the *kejawen* continued to revere the tomb and both became followers of Habib Luthfi. I still see those villagers come to Pekalongan every now and then.

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[156] *Kejawen* or *Agama Jawa* (religion of Java) refers to a modern Javanese religious tradition that identifies itself as a syncretic amalgam of animistic, Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic beliefs and practices. The notion of *kejawen* surfaced following the criticism on older forms of court-centered Islam by the *santris,* who are usually referred to as "orthodox" Muslims. In response to such criticisms some Javanese committed to the older Javanese forms of religiosity invented their own religious tradition to differentiate themselves from the *santris,* popularly known as *kejawen.* Since the New Order period, there has been a steady decrease in the numbers of Javanese professing *kejawen* concomitant with the strengthening of the *santris.* Many *kejawen* teachers no longer dared to assume community leadership role for fear of being branded as communist sympathizers (Thohir 2006: 254). Nevertheless, this was not true everywhere and at all levels of Javanese society. As late as the early 1980s, James Siegel (1986) reported how many youths in Solo (Central Java) were still studying with teachers who promised to confer mystical illumination and invulnerability. For more on the *kejawen* in New Order Java, see: Ricklefs 2012: chapter 5.

Idrus's recollection provides an aperture into the processes behind the growth of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa.* It highlights his role as mobile preacher interacting with a diverse audience, who in turn became incorporated into his network. Nevertheless, such networks are not durable on their own. There need to be some further mechanisms that unite and stabilize the networks into a durable social formation that revolves around Habib Luthfi's authority. In this chapter I show how the conceptual, symbolic, and organizational framework of *ṭarīqa* serves that purpose. I propose that a *ṭarīqa* can be analytically defined as what I call an *ordering mechanism* that allows a recognized religious authority to actively incorporate his vast networks into a proprietary *jamāʿa*.[157]

Recent works on Sufism have moved away from the notion of 'religious order' that was employed by earlier scholars who analyzed Sufi *ṭarīqas* in relation to their perceived similarities with the Christian monastic institutions (Trimingham 1971). Shahzad Bashir (2011), for instance, opts for the term 'network' rather than 'order' for its relative neutrality.[158] While the term 'network' captures the complex, nebulous, and historically contingent horizontal relations among the *jamāʿa* of a particular *ṭarīqa*, it does not in my view capture the ways in which *ṭarīqas* have created their own modalities of *vertical interaction* that have allowed them to produce a sense of coherence across time. While Bashir's argument for the importance of embodied beliefs and

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[157] A *ṭarīqa*, as the historian Nile Green suggests, is a conceptual and practical apparatus that reproduces and standardizes Islamic practice and doctrine through time and space while "maintaining a degree of consistency" (Green 2012: 81). As a conceptual and symbolic mechanism, a *ṭarīqa* facilitates the development of corporate identity through various proprietary markings and practices that formalize the relationship between the Sufi masters and their *jamāʿas*. Such identity allows affiliates of a *ṭarīqa* to conceive their doctrine and practices as something inherited, "as a cross-generational system of inheritance," while allowing them to distinguish their tradition from another within an encompassing religious community (*Ibid*).

[158] According to Bashir, the notion of 'order' "has led scholars to misapprehend the type of internal cohesion and discipline that can be attributed to the Sufi communities in question" (Bashir 2011: 11). Bashir's usage of 'network' to supplant 'order' is geared toward understanding Sufi *ṭarīqas* on their own terms, as a historically contingent form of sociality.

practices as mechanisms that unite people into a moral community devoted to charismatic exemplars is well taken, it should also be noted that religious social formation take on a more complex form — such as Sufi *ṭarīqa* — precisely "when the group finds it needs to acquire a representation of itself that can incorporate the idea of its continuity beyond the immediate context of its members' interrelating" (Hervieu-Léger 2000: 151-2). At the same time, the term network does not adequately capture the hierarchically-structured interaction between the disciples (*murīds*) and their *murshids* (Hammoudi 1997). Equally important is the fact that the informal and loose connotation of the term 'network' downplays the various techniques of boundary-making that have historically been adopted by a *ṭarīqa* to separate themselves from others. If we seek to comprehend the mechanisms of reproduction and authentication that have enabled each *ṭarīqa* to formulate and sustain a distinct identity *vis-à-vis* other *ṭarīqas*, we require an analytical framework not adequately provided by the notion of 'network.'

Here, I suggest that the notion of 'order' should be refined rather than completely abandoned.[159] I propose that the case of Habib Luthfi points to the importance of a *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism of a jamāʿa*. By using the notion of 'order' in its verbal form, I hope to show how (1) 'orders' are sustained by networks, (2) networks are not stable over time, and (3) networks become a durable social formation through a persistent *ordering mechanism* that establishes horizontal solidarity and vertical continuity beyond the interpersonal encounters between its participants. *Ṭarīqa* is therefore an ongoing process of ordering and stabilizing networks into a standardized and hierarchically-structured proprietary *jamāʿa.*

[159] One reason for this is certainly because the term 'order' is useful for comparative purposes. It allows constructive comparison across religious traditions that can shed light on the similarities and differences in the conceptual, symbolic, and practical features of these traditions. Such features include their organizational infrastructure, conception of affinities, and their mechanisms of reproduction, self-representation, and authentication.

In this chapter, I will show several constitutive elements of this *ordering mechanism*, including initiation ceremonies or oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*), *dhikr* manual, and physical congregational centers where the *jamāʿa* assembles on a regular basis. *Ordering mechanism* is also instantiated in the built environment of the *murshid*'s house and the implicit code of conduct applied within its perimeter. Positing *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism* in turn allows us to situate differences and contestations between different *ṭarīqas* — or between different *murshids* of the same *ṭarīqa* — not only in terms of varying *silsilās,* but also in terms of the divergent views regarding the legitimate formal, material, and organizational techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa*. Thus even a single *ṭarīqa* connected to the same *silsilā* may turn out to have diverging *ordering mechanism* that in some cases may lead to either schism, the birth of a new *ṭarīqa,* or the development of a 'suborder.'

Kliwonan

Ever since its opening in 1999, *Kanzus Shalawat* has been the center of various socio-religious activities. Having his own congregational center meant that Habib Luthfi was able to organize various *ṭarīqa* and non-*ṭarīqa* events on a regular basis. Habib Luthfi's monthly gathering that takes place every *Kliwon* Friday and was initially held at his house was relocated to *Kanzus Shalawat*, thereby making it into a more open gathering. As a result, the *kliwonan* — as it came to be known — began to be attended not only by Habib Luthfi's NKS *jamāʿa* but also by neighbors and other residents of Pekalongan. Habib Luthfi's fame as a preacher and his constant speaking engagements in different places in Java, facilitated his interactions with diverse audiences, many of which began to travel to Pekalongan and attend the *kliwonan*. Over time, the monthly gathering became bigger to the extent that the main road in front of the congregational

center had to be closed for the occasion. Today, the *kliwonan* is attended by around five to six thousand people.

Figure 6.1: *Kanzus Shalawat,* Pekalongan

The *kliwonan* begins at seven in the morning with the appearance of Habib Luthfi — dressed in his robe and turban — in front of his house. He then walks with several of his guests in a solemn procession to the *Kanzus Shalawat* through the alley filled with people who have come to see and hear him speak. Whilst walking, Habib Luthfi greets his followers who enthusiastically try to kiss his hand. Uniformed members of the NU paramilitary wing, the Banser, accompany Habib Luthfi on his walk while opening the path by ordering people to move

aside.[160] Habib Luthfi enters the *Kanzus Shalawat* through the back door, walks past the densely-filled main chamber, and sits on the front porch of the building overlooking the road where the majority of the congregants are sitting. From that position, Habib Luthfi is able to see and be seen by those who sit inside and outside the building.

Figure 6.2: *Kliwonan* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*

[160] Banser (Barisan Ansor Serba Guna/ Ansor All-Purpose Forces) is the paramilitary arm of NU's youth wing known as Ansor. Ansor, and subsequently Banser, was formed in 1962 to meet the expanding presence of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and its youth wing, the Pemuda Rakyat (People's Youth). In 1965, with the support and training of the Indonesian military, Ansor was involved in the military-led purging and massacres of PKI members, labor unionists, communist sympathizers as well as innocent peasants. Banser claims to have about 520,000 members consisting of agricultural workers, public employees, small businessmen, or unemployed members of the community who had received military training. They wear green uniforms and black beret resembling that of the army. The role of the Banser is to protect NU-affiliated scholars in time of need, and to provide security and assistance during the gatherings held by NU and their affiliated scholars. For more on Banser see: Ali-Fauzi 2008.

Figure 6.3: ***Kliwonan*** **at the** ***Kanzus Shalawat***

Shortly after, Habib Luthfi leads the *tawassul,* naming individuals who make up his *silsilās* from the Prophet Muḥammad to Shaykh Abdul Malik and those who make up his *nasab,* from the Prophet Muḥammad down to his parents. He then leads the congregants in *dhikr*. In concluding the *dhikr* session, Habib Luthfi leads the congregants to collectively recite the first part of the Islamic creedal sentence, *lā ilāha illa allāh* (there is no God but God), two hundred fifty times, beginning in slow pace and gradually becoming faster to the extent that one can only hear *illa allāh.* The pace keeps increasing and by the end of the session, one simply hears *hu, hu, hu* (He, He, He). Like an able conductor, Habib Luthfi then smoothly halts the fast incantation by

returning to the initial slow tempo, before finally concluding the *dhikr* with the second part of the creedal sentence: *Muḥammad rasūl allāh* (Muḥammad is the messenger of God).

Following the *dhikr,* one of Habib Luthfi's disciples — usually *kyai* Zakariya (discussed in the last chapter) — recites and translates into Javanese one or two paragraphs from a Sufi text, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl fi l-awliyāʾ* of the Turkish Naqshabandī-Khālidī scholar Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā al-Gumushkhanawī (d. 1311/1893).[161] Some in the audience have a copy of the text in their hands and write down the word for word translation as recited by *Kyai* Zakariya. The recitation usually takes place for less than ten minutes. Then Habib Luthfi begins his thirty minute sermon in Indonesian elaborating what was recited in Arabic and translated into Javanese by *Kyai* Zakariya. The sermon concludes the ritual of the *kliwonan*.

Following the sermon, however, Habib Luthfi remains sitting on the porch of the *Kanzus Shalawat* to avail himself to his *jamāʿa*. Guarded by members of the Banser, each congregant comes forward to kiss Habib Luthfi's hand in an orderly manner. While kissing his hand, the congregants also slip an *amplop* (envelope, monetary gift) into Habib Luthfi's hand. An attendant sitting next to Habib Luthfi puts the envelopes into a big bag to be counted later on by officials of the *Kanzus Shalawat*. Aside for Habib Luthfi's personal use, the money accrued every *kliwonan* is used for the maintenance of the congregational center. Some of it also goes to members of the Banser who work during the event, and to pay the salaries of the center's

[161] According to Martin van Bruinessen (1992: 74), this Khālidī text was first brought to Java towards the end of the nineteenth century by Javanese pilgrims who were exposed to it during their stay in Mecca. Subsequently, it became quite popular in Java among the followers of the Khālidī-Naqshabandiyya.

In traditionalist Muslim circles of Indonesia, there is an underlying assumption that Javanese language is far more richer than Indonesian, and as such, the former is deemed more capable of capturing the richness of Arabic than the latter. Thus even in traditionalist *pesantrens* of West Java and Sumatra, a scholar usually translate the Arabic text first into Javanese, and subsequently explaining it in local languages. Such a language ideology is tied to the fact that Javanese has been the main pedagogical language of the *pesantrens* and that *pesantren* students are trained to translate Arabic texts into Javanese and not Indonesian.

officials. Habib Luthfi sits on the porch, meeting and greeting his *jamāʿas* from around eight thirty in the morning until around eleven thirty when the *jamāʿa* finally disperses for the Friday prayer.

Figure 6.4: Meeting and greeting Habib Luthfi

Figure 6.5: Meeting and greeting Habib Luthfi

Not all of those who attend the *kliwonan* are the formal *murīds* (disciples) of Habib Luthfi. That is, not all of them have been initiated into the *ṭarīqa*. Indeed, the *kliwonan* provides an opportunity for those who have decided to enter the *ṭarīqa*. While Habib Luthfi meets and greets his *jamāʿa,* a ceremony of initiation takes place inside the *Kanzus Shalawat*, presided by one of his deputies (*badal*), Pak Busroni, an accountant from Solo (Central Java). There are usually fifty to seventy-five initiates of diverse age and economic background in a typical *kliwonan,* around one third of whom were females. Prior to the initiation ceremony (Ind. *bai'at,* Ar. *bayʿa*: pledge of allegiance), those who have decided to enter the *ṭarīqa* are asked to assemble inside the congregational center. Female initiates forms a separate grouping and sit beside the male congregants. The initiates are then asked to fill in their personal details on a computer-generated form distributed by officials of the *Kanzus Shalawat.* They are also asked to buy the *ṭarīqa*'s manual booklet akin to the one used in Kedungparuk, discussed in the last chapter. I will return to this booklet in the next section.

Pak Busroni begins the initiation ceremony by explaining to the audience the meaning of joining a *ṭarīqa*. He specifies that he is not a *murshid*, and that he merely acts on behalf of Habib Luthfi, the real *murshid*. He also explains how pledging an allegiance to a *murshid* is a *sunna*, just as the Prophet's companions used to do. He warns them that *bai'at* is legally binding under the *sharīʿa*, and that once initiated, they will have to obey the *murshid* unconditionally. Pak Busroni then goes through the *ṭarīqa* manual, explaining how each *dhikr* is to be recited. "All of the *dhikr* here are taught by the Prophet Muḥammad, and we are connected to them through the *silsilā* of the *murshid,*" Pak Busroni states. He then recites a statement written in the *ṭarīqa* booklet:

> A Muslim should perform *dhikr* in accordance to the ways prescribed by the Prophet Muḥammad. This is why in the *ṭarīqa*, disciples perform *dhikr* by emulating the *murshid.* This means that in performing *dhikr*, he/she admits that the *dhikr* is a result of emulation and being in a *jamāʿa* (*dia hanya mengikuti atau berjamaah*), and not something he/she makes up him/herself (*rekayasa sendiri*) or a singular act. By pledging allegiance to a *murshid* and emulating his *dhikr*, you enter the *silsilā* of the Sufis (*mutaṣawifīn*), meaning you enter the circle of the saints. So when you enter the *ṭarīqa*, you are involved in performing acts performed by the great beloveds of Allāh (*turut melakukan perkara yang dijalankan oleh para kekasih Allah yang agung-agung*). The similitude of someone performing *dhikr* after entering a *ṭarīqa* is like a circular chain made up of links. Each link is connected to the other all the way to the first link, the Prophet Muḥammad. So when a link moves, other links that form the chain also move. This is the difference between someone who performs *dhikr* after entering the *ṭarīqa* and those who do so without having a *silsilā* (Bin Yaḥyā 2006: 30-31).

Pak Busroni thus presents the *ṭarīqa* as the Prophetic *sunna* in both indexical and iconic terms. Not only that the teachings and rituals are indexically linked to the Prophet through the mediation of those who make up the *silsilā*, but the act of pledging allegiance to the *murshid* itself is construed as iconic of the pledge of allegiance made by the Companions to the Prophet. The *ṭarīqa* is also posited as constituting both the vertical link between the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* and the horizontal link between members of the *jamāʿa.* According to Pak Busroni, even when a member of the *jamāʿa* performs the *dhikr* individually, they are still counted as performing it collectively based on their collective connection to, and emulation of the *murshid*.

Pak Busroni then holds the hand of one of the male congregants and asks those sitting directly behind him to put their right hand on his shoulder. The same goes for those sitting behind the first layer of people, thereby forming an unbroken physical chain to Pak Busroni. Pak Busroni also holds one end of a prayer bead (*tasbīḥ*), while asking one of the female initiates to hold the other end, thereby forming a parallel chain to the female initiates without involving actual bodily contact. After all, physical contact between unrelated members of the opposite sex

is not allowed under Islamic law. Pak Busroni asks the congregants to repeat the Islamic creedal sentence after him, and to repeat, in Indonesian:

> I am content (*ridho*) with Allāh as my God, Our master Muḥammad as my Prophet, and Habib Muhammad Luthfi b. Ali bin Yahya as my teacher and *murshid*. I promise to obey the *sharīʿa* of Allāh as taught by the Prophet Muḥammad and which I have received from my teacher Habib Muhammad Luthfi bin Ali bin Yahya. I ask for Allāh's forgiveness, and I promise not to perform major sins (*dosa besar*) and to try as much as possible to refrain from minor sins (*dosa kecil*).

Pak Busroni then leads them to collectively recite the *fatiḥa* (the first *sūra* of the Qurʾān), which concludes the initiation ceremony. The *ṭarīqa* initiation thus serves as an ordering mechanism that structures both vertical and horizontal relation among Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa,* operating to formally constitute and brand the initiates as the disciples (*murīds*) of Habib Luthfi while providing them with a new corporate identity.

Figure 6.6: *Ṭarīqa* initiation ceremony

Aside from the *kliwonan*, the *Kanzus Shalawat* also hosts two weekly classes (*pengajian*) led by local scholars who were asked by Habib Luthfi to teach at the center. The two classes offered at the *Kanzus Shalawat* are Islamic law for women and Sufism for men. Each class is attended by around three to four hundred people. The class on Islamic law reads the *Fatḥ al-muʿīn bi sharḥ qurrat al-ʿayn* of the Shafiʿī jurist of Malabar, Zayn al-Dīn b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Malībārī (d. 974/1567), and it meets every Tuesday morning. Aside from the monthly *kliwonan,* there is no class on Sufism for women. The class on Sufism for men uses the *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn* of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 504/1111) and meets every Wednesday evening. Those teaching at the *Kanzus Shalawat* are competent scholars who graduated from famous *pesantrens* of East Java. Unlike the established, usually second or third generation *kyais,* who have their own *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school), however, prior to teaching at the *Kanzus Shalawat* they were relatively unknown in Pekalongan. They do not have their own congregational center, and as a result, find the prospect of teaching at a center owned by a scholar with a large *jamāʿa* appealing. By teaching at the *Kanzus Shalawat*, these scholars became known to the public and began to be addressed as *kyais*, although without having congregational centers of their own. By sharing the congregational center with these scholars, Habib Luthfi is able to focus on carrying out speaking engagements outside of Pekalongan, while still ensuring the vibrancy of the *Kanzus Shalawat.*

Ever since its inception, the *Kanzus Shalawat* has become a thriving congregational center where Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* assembles on a regular basis. The monthly *kliwonan* acts as a site where the bonds between Habib Luthfi and his *jamāʿa* are reproduced and personalized through the activity of meet and greet, and formalized through the *ṭarīqa* initiation. The weekly

classes in Islamic law and Sufism also help to establish the *Kanzus Shalawat* as an Islamic congregational center for local Muslims. While the texts are recited in Arabic, they are translated into Indonesian, thereby making the texts available to a broader audience. Some of the women who frequent the Islamic law class, for instance, are not interested in *ṭarīqa* or Sufism. One lady who hailed from the Mandailing cultural group of North Sumatra and has settled in Pekalongan for thirty years told me that she is an active member of the modernist organization, Muhammadiyah, and that she attends the class simply because she lives nearby and that she wants to learn Islamic law. Twice a year, usually a few days before the annual *mawlid* and on the eve of the Indonesian independence day, Habib Luthfi hosts the performance of the traditional Javanese shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) or the Sundanese wooden puppet (*wayang golek*) at the *Kanzus Shalawat*, which also attracts the wider public beyond his *ṭarīqa* circles. The variety of events and classes, as well as the usage of the national language thus allowed *Kanzus Shalawat* to become a more open congregational center, in contrast the *al-rawḍa* mosque — the seat of the *manṣabate* — with its pedantic commitment to the Arabic language and Bā ʿAlawī rituals that limit the participation of the broader public. Unlike *Kanzus Shalawat*, *al-rawḍa* mosque is not open for women, nor does it offer classes in different Islamic sciences. As stated in chapter 4, the main concern of the *manṣabate* lies in maintaining ritual regularity, and as such it does not accommodate the vast varieties, and changing, Muslim publics. The *Kanzus Shalawat*, on the other hand, is consciously configured as an Indonesian rather than a Ḥaḍramī or Bā ʿAlawī center.

Figure 6.7: Habib Luthfi opening the performance of *wayang golek* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*.

Ṭarīqa Shādhilīya-ʿAlawiyya

The establishment of the *Kanzhus Shalawat* gradually led to the shift in the identity of Habib Luthfi's *ṭarīqa.* Prior to 2006, Habib Luthfi mainly presented himself as the *murshid* of the Naqshabandī-Khālidī-Shadhilī *ṭarīqa* (NKS) that he inherited from his *murshid*, Shaykh Abdul Malik. The NKS *ṭarīqa* manual, the *al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl li tashīl al-wuṣūl* — discussed in the last chapter — was for a while the *dhikr* text used in Habib Luthfi's circle. In 2006, however, Habib Luthfi composed his own *ṭarīqa* manual, entitled *Awrād al-ṭarīqa al-shādhiliya al-ʿalawiyya*, the Litanies of the Shādhiliyā-ʿAlawiyya *ṭarīqa*. This manual is sold during the *kliwonan* at *Kanzus*

Shalawat and it is the text that the *ṭarīqa* initiates are asked to buy and recite on a daily basis. With the composition of the *Awrād* the *Kanzus Shalawat* gradually became no longer seen as a satellite of Kedungparuk, but as an autonomous center of the *Ṭarīqa Shādhilīya-ʿAlawiyya* (SA *ṭarīqa*).

Figure 6.8: ***Awrād al-ṭarīqa al-shādhiliya al-ʿalawiyya***

Unlike *al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl,* the *Awrād* is written in both Arabic and Indonesian. For the various invocations that comprise the litanies, the text provides both their original Arabic, their Latin transliteration, and their Indonesian translation, thereby making it accessible even to people who cannot read Arabic script. The manual begins by listing — in Indonesian — the four conditions that need to be fulfilled prior to entering the *ṭarīqa.* These are: the minimum age limit (18 years old), the permission from the husband for married women, three days of fasting, and the performance of ritual bath to cleanse oneself from major impurities. The last two should be done prior to the initiation ceremony. The text then provides the proper intention for entering the *ṭarīqa*, namely "(1) to reach union (*wuṣūl*) with God by following the *sunna* of the Prophet as handed down through the *ṭarīqa,* (2) to leave all major sins and minimize minor sins, and (3) to honor (*takdzim*) the teachers, the pious, and the saints" (Bin Yahya 2006: i). It specifies the time for reciting the litanies, i.e. following the dawn and the twilight prayers, while stating that it is obligatory (*wajib*) for disciples to fulfill this obligation. It is obligatory for a disciple to compensate (*qaḍā*) for failing to recite the litanies within their prescribed time by reciting them at another time. The text then lists the four constitutive elements of spiritual wayfaring (*sulūk*): (1) learning or teaching all aspects of the religion, (2) performing each obligatory prayers collectively, (3) reciting the Qurʾān on a daily basis, and (4) maintaining friendship and fraternal bonds (*silaturahmi*).

The bulk of the manual consists of the Qurʾānic verses, invocations, and *ṣalawāt* that comprise the litany. This includes several short invocations like *astagfirullāh* (I ask God's forgiveness), *lā ilāha illa allāh* (there is no God but God), *sallallāh ʿalā muḥammad* (God's salutation upon the Muḥammad), each of which are to be repeated one hundred times. It also

consists of four short Qurʾānic *sūras* to be recited three times each. The manual also has a section explaining the importance of *silsilā* and *ṭarīqa* initiation to the performance of *dhikr* as discussed in the last section. The last few pages of the manual consists of the *silsilā* of the SA *ṭarīqa* that schematically connects Habib Luthfi to the Prophet Muḥammad (see: appendix D).

Like the *al-Tarqīb al-uṣūl*, the *Awrād al-ṭarīqa al-shādhilīya al-ʿAlawiyya* begins with the *tawassul* (see: chapter 5). The first *tawassul* names the Prophet, his family and companions. The second *tawassul* names the founder of the *Ṭarīqa Shādhiliyya*, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (d. 656/1258), his followers and those who are linked to him, albeit without specifying their names. The third *tawassul* reads:

> To the presence of our teacher, our *murshid,* the educator of our spirits (*murabbi rūḥinā*), the most knowledgable (*al-ʿālim al-ʿallāmah*), the father of Muḥammad Bahā al-Dīn [the name of Habib Luthfi's eldest son], Muḥammad Luṭfī bin ʿAlī bin Hāshim bin Yaḥyā. May Allāh grant him long life in health and abundant blessings. May Allāh ennoble his stature and expand his honor. Also to his children and those who follow him from among the pious slaves of Allāh, the believers, the sincere, the thankful. And to those who join them in saying "There is no God but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God", and to those who habituate themselves in sending salutations to the Prophet, especially to the presence of his teacher the axial saint (*al-quṭb*) our master ʿAbd al-Malik bin Ilyās bin Yaḥyā, may Allāh purify his essence, and to his teachers and disciples (Bin Yahya 2006: 3-5).

Note how the *tawassul* situates Habib Luthfi as the main *murshid* of the *tarīqa*, while positioning Shaykh Abdul Malik in a secondary position, although he is described as an axial saint. Note also that whilst Habib Luthfi identifies his synthetic *ṭarīqa* as a combination of the Shādhilīya and the ʿAlawiyya, the only figure — apart from the Prophet, Habib Luthfi, and Shaykh Abdul Malik — that is explicitly named in the *tawassul* is the founder of the *Ṭarīqa Shādhiliyya*. Absent from the *tawassul* are the names of the Bā ʿAlawī masters of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Interestingly, Habib Luthfi addresses this lacunae by identifying his teacher Shaykh Abdul Malik — who is generally

known as a Javanese *kyai* — as someone with a Bin Yaḥyā family name, and hence a Bā ʿAlawī. This is of course a contested identity.[162] Nevertheless, by identifying Shaykh Abdul Malik as a member of the Bin Yaḥyā family, Habib Luthfi is, to a certain degree, able to present the *silsilā* that he inherited from his teacher not only as Naqshabandī or Shadhilī, but also as a Bā ʿAlawī *silsilā*.[163] Such a discursive strategy is further reinforced in the *silsilā* of the SA *ṭarīqa* in the last few pages of the booklet. The *silsilā* begins with God, the archangel Gabriel, the Prophet, and goes down to the founder of the *Ṭarīqa Shādhiliyya,* before finally reaching Shaykh Abdul Malik and Habib Luthfi. Interestingly, in the *silsilā*, Shaykh Abdul Malik's name is preceded by two honorifics used by the Bā ʿAlawīs: *sayyid* and *habīb*. In other words, he is presented not as a *kyai* or a shaykh, but as a Bā ʿAlawī.

Having a new *ṭarīqa* manual different from the one used in Kedungparuk marked the final stage in the emergence of the *Kanzus Shalawat* as a new autonomous center. The process began with Habib Luthfi's ability to host an annual *mawlid* in Pekalongan, further strengthened by the construction of a congregational center, and finalized by a rebranding of the center's identity. As such, *Kanzus Shalawat* is no longer identified as a satellite of Kedungparuk, but as the center of the SA *ṭarīqa*. This, however, does not mean that Habib Luthfi disowned the NKS *silsila*. He remains a *murshid* of the NKS *ṭarīqa* and he still appoints NKS deputies, including

162 For instance, the leadership of the Rabithah ʿAlawiyya, the institution that issues and legitimizes Bā ʿAlawī *nasab* is known for its critical stance towards Habib Luthfi, who in their view, liberally identifies Javanese scholars or aristocrats as Bā ʿAlawīs. The tension between the Rabithah and Habib Luthfi escalated in the late 1990s when Habib Luthfi made a public statement regarding the Bā ʿAlawī *nasab* of the leader of the Nahdlatul 'Ulama (and subsequently, the fourth Indonesian President), Abdurahman Wahid. Similarly, the Rabithah ʿAlawiyya also rejects Habib Luthfi's identification of Shaykh Abdul Malik as a Bā ʿAlawī from the Bin Yaḥyā family.

163 Indeed a new biography of Shaykh Abdul Malik, written under the direction of Habib Luthfi by one of his Bā ʿAlawī disciples lists the Bā ʿAlawī teachers (mostly from the Bin Yaḥyā family) of both Shaykh Abdul Malik and his father Shaykh Ilyās aside from their Naqshabandī-Khālidī teachers (Assegaf n.d.: 29-31, 45-8). This biography is published jointly by the *Kanzus Shalawat* and the family of Shaykh Abdul Malik. It is now considered as the official biography of Shaykh Abdul Malik, and sold in both Pekalongan and Kedungparuk.

the descendants of Shaykh Abdul Malik in Kedungparuk. Nonetheless, whenever there are newcomers who wish to become formal disciples of Habib Luthfi, they would be initiated into the SA, and not the NKS *ṭarīqa*. Similarly, whenever his older students want to renew their pledge of allegiance, Habib Luthfi tells them to do so during the *kliwonan*, which means that they will be initiated by Pak Busroni into the SA *ṭarīqa* notwithstanding their earlier NKS initiation. The SA *jamāʿa* thus expanded through both the initiation of the newcomers and the gradual shift in the *ṭarīqa* affiliation of Habib Luthfi's NKS *jamāʿa*. Consequently, as the SA *jamāʿa* expands, the NKS *jamāʿa* contracts.

When I asked Habib Luthfi regarding this shift, he explained to me that the NKS *ṭarīqa* has become too demanding for the current era:

> It is more difficult to become a good *Naqshabandī-Khālidī* disciple as it requires practices like the forty-days seclusion, which is less realizable in today's society. That is why, *Ṭarīqa Shadhiliya ʿAlawiyya* demands less from the disciples. The daily litany is brief so that even if you work in an office or factory, you can still strive to become a responsible disciple. *Mbah* [grandfather] Malik, for instance, requires his disciples to recite the *ṣalawāt* [salutation to the Prophet] between one thousand to sixteen thousand times on a daily basis. I still practice that everyday, but I cannot expect others to do so. We have to understand that times are changing, people are changing. What was doable thirty years ago is no longer doable for most people today. If a *ṭarīqa* is to become an important aspect in people's life, then it also has to be suitable to their lives rather than becoming a burden. This is also why I only require them to come and see me once a month for the *kliwonan.* People are busy, they have many obligations. During my days with *Mbah* Abdul Malik, most of those who entered the *ṭarīqa* were peasants who had ample time to perform the litanies. My students as you know come from diverse backgrounds. How can I expect a government minister or a general, or a businessman to keep their daily litanies if I instruct them to recite a prayer sixteen thousand times? Yet, my role is to connect all kinds of people to my grandfather the Prophet. So I have to conceive a new way to do so.

Both Habib Luthfi's explanation and the history of his *ṭarīqa* allude to the need to analyze a *ṭarīqa* not simply as being a conservative institution. Rather, what the case of Habib Luthfi points to is the ways in which a *ṭarīqa* — through its *murshid* — can generate conceptual and

practical innovations in its attempt to remain as an effective *ordering mechanism*. Such innovations, however, are not deemed as new, but as something inherited from the past due to the *murshid*'s genealogy. Being the possessor of the *silsilā* means that the *murshid* is taken by his followers as an authoritative access point to the transmission channels that connect the *jamāʿa* to the Prophet. While genealogy legitimizes innovations, it also limits the kind of alterations that a *murshid* can affect. Ultimately, there are limited stockpiles of rituals, litanies, and practices transmitted through the *silsilā.* Being a possessor of two *silsilās* — that of the Naqshabandī and the Shadhilī — allows a *murshid* like Habib Luthfi to pick, choose, and combine from his stockpiles and create a new synthesis.[164] He is also able to increase or decrease the specific numbers of which particular invocations ought to be recited. One may suggest that theoretically, the more *silsilās* a *murshid* possesses, the more discursive and practical stockpiles are available to him which in turn allows a greater degree of flexibility that may result in new conceptual and practical combinations and innovations. Having two or more *silsilās* increases the possibility for a *murshid* attached to a particular *ṭarīqa* to innovate his own *ordering mechanism* which may in turn lead to the formation of a new independent *ṭarīqa,* a synthetic *ṭarīqa*, or a sub-order.

In the House of a *Murshid*

Thus far I have shown how a *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism* is constituted by proprietary practices*,* including initiation ceremonies, *ṭarīqa* manuals, and physical congregational centers where the *jamāʿa* assembles on a regular basis. Another important element of a *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism of a jamāʿa,* is the built environment of the *murshid*'s house and the code of

[164] This is clearly demonstrated in Habib Luthfi's *tarīqa* manual, the *Awrād*. That is, while the *ṭarīqa* identifies itself as Shādhilī and ʿAlawī, some of its contents are derived from the Naqshabandī *silsilā*, like the invocation, "My Lord, You are my destiny and Your pleasure is what I seek" (*ilāhī anta maqṣūdī wa riḍāka maṭlūbī*), which is not generally invoked in a Shādhilī *dhikr*.

conduct within its perimeter. In this section I turn to the house of Habib Luthfi and show how on the one hand, the *murshid*'s house is constantly open to his *jamāʿa,* while on the other hand it is hierarchically structured. Both of these features in turn help to order the horizontal interaction between members of the *jamāʿa* and their vertical relation with the *murshid*.

In 2002, Habib Luthfi moved into a new residence just a few houses away from his old small house. Unlike the old house, which was given to one of his daughters, the new house is a luxurious and expansive two-storied house. Similar to the residence of the *manṣab* discussed in chapter 4, Habib Luthfi's house is hierarchically structured. Despite being open twenty four hours and that everyone can enter the house and socialize among themselves, access to different parts of the house is hierarchically structured. There are people who can go to the second floor where they can get a quicker access to Habib Luthfi, and those who can only stay on the ground floor where they have to wait for Habib Luthfi to descend.

A large carpeted reception chamber makes up the ground floor adjoined to a small prayer room and several bathrooms. This chamber is open twenty four hours and people can freely come and go. The reception chamber is always filled with Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* who come in big and small groups from all over Indonesia. They can sit for hours waiting for Habib Luthfi to come down. Those who come from out of town and cannot afford to pay for accommodation spend the night in the reception chamber. Once or twice a day, Habib Luthfi comes and sits at the reception chamber to meet and greet his visitors. People come to see Habib Luthfi for various reasons. Some come to ask for advice, some come to request his prayer, other come just to get to know him. Most come bearing gifts, whether money, fresh produce, and even cigarettes. Each group sits with him for five minutes or so, before he turns to another group. Once he finishes

talking to every group in the room, he returns upstairs. Those who arrive just as he is leaving will have to wait for hours or even a day before Habib Luthfi descends again.

The family and guest bedrooms are located on the second floor. Next to Habib Luthfi's bedroom is a small library where he often sits on the carpeted floor with his close friends or relatives. The library opens to a balcony with several wooden chairs, where Habib Luthfi likes to spend the evening. Also on the second floor is a modern living room with sofas and coffee-tables, where Habib Luthfi receives non-Muslim guests and dignitaries. Another door on the second floor leads to Habib Luthfi's soundproof music studio, containing six keyboards and other musical instruments. The studio is manned by Habib Luthfi's musically-talented nephew, who is always ready to accompany his uncle whenever he wants to play the keyboard. The studio is where Habib Luthfi works to compose his songs. Oftentimes, when he has close friends or important guests, he entertains them with music in the studio.

Those who personally know Habib Luthfi usually bypass the ground floor reception room, ascend the stairs, and wait in the library. Those who are close to him usually go straight to the balcony or the music studio where Habib Luthfi is likely to be found. The hierarchically structured access to the second floor generates the emergence of intermediaries consisting of people close to Habib Luthfi who are able to bring others to an otherwise inaccessible parts of the house where they are more likely to encounter Habib Luthfi. These intermediaries receive remuneration from their clients, who usually consist of wealthy people from the big cities who had never come to Pekalongan and who do not want to wait in the ground floor reception room. These intermediaries sit in front of Habib Luthfi's house where they can welcome the guests. The role of these intermediaries in mediating between the guests and Habib Luthfi thus resonates

with the role of the *ṭarīqa* deputies (*badal*) in mediating the relationship between the *murshid* and the *jamāʿa*.

Most of the time, the hierarchical structure of the house is maintained without explicit disciplinary mechanism. To a large extent, the built-environment, with its upstairs-downstairs separation, limits the mobility of most guests. Nevertheless, there are times when this hierarchical structure is transgressed, thereby necessitating an explicit disciplinary measure. Several times, I have witnessed people not known to Habib Luthfi entering the library whilst he was sitting with some guests. Habib Luthfi turned to them and said politely in refined Javanese, something like "brother (*mas*), why don't you wait downstairs" or "sit downstairs for a minute yes?, we are in the middle of an important conversation." When such a transgression occurs in the absence of Habib Luthfi, those working in the house or the intermediaries would tell the transgressors — often in rough manner— to return downstairs.

Habib Luthfi's house, however, is not only a site of discipline, it is also a site of horizontal sociality between those who comprise his *jamāʿa*. Sitting with different people in the waiting rooms, I began to notice how perfect strangers can become friends. At first, strangers sitting together whilst waiting for Habib Luthfi are quite shy of one another. One of them usually initiates a superficial conversation about the other person's origin, how he/she came to Pekalongan, and how long he/she has known or heard of Habib Luthfi. As conviviality builds up, they begin to discuss more substantial matters like business or even things that pertain to the *ṭarīqa*. They exchange stories about Habib Luthfi, many of which relate to his saintly marvels (*karāma*). Such conversations help to foster horizontal commonality between people from different places who come to see themselves as fellow members of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa*.

Conversations between visitors may involve dialogues between a disciple of Habib Luthfi and those who do not consider themselves as such. Once I witnessed a man from Palembang (South Sumatra) who asked a man from the island of Madura (East Java), the reason of his visit to Habib Luthfi. The Madurese told him that he had come to seek Habib Luthfi's *baraka* (benediction). Unbeknownst to him, the man from Lampung was not particularly fond of Sufism, and he only came to see Habib Luthfi to seek his help regarding his dispute with an army general over land ownership. He told the Madurese that there is no such a thing as *baraka* and that the proper intention of visiting a scholar would be to learn from his knowledge. The Madurese refuted the other man, saying that he does not understand the way to properly respect the descendants of the Prophet and that his intention of visiting Habib Luthfi is limited to worldly matters. The debate went on to the point that the Madurese tried to explain the intricate Sufi metaphysical theory of the Muḥammadan Light (*nūr muḥammad*) to the other person. When Habib Luthfi entered the room, however, the debate came to an abrupt end. What this example highlights is the fact that such arguments that take place in the *murshid*'s house afford the disciple with the ability to articulate his identity as a disciple of Habib Luthfi.

While open social interaction between guests is the norm in Habib Luthfi's house, it can actually perturb other guests who see it as a violation of what they perceive as the proper code of conduct befitting the *jamāʿa* of a *ṭarīqa*. Once, a Khālidī-Naqshabandī *murshid* from Damascus was waiting to see Habib Luthfi in the library. He was sitting quietly accompanied by two of his Indonesian students. Other people were also waiting for Habib Luthfi in the library, whilst smoking, joking, and laughing. The Syrian *murshid* was shocked and upset by what he saw. He

clapped his hands, seeking the attention of the other people, and began reciting three Qurʾānic verses*,* asking one of the students to translate them into Indonesian:

> Believers, do not raise your voices above the Prophet's, do not raise your voice when speaking to him as you do to one another, or your [good] deeds may be cancelled out without you knowing. It is those who lower their voices in the presence of God's Messenger whose hearts God has proved to be aware — they will have forgiveness, and a great reward — but most of those who shout to you [Prophet] from outside your private rooms lack understanding. It would have been better for them if they had waited patiently for you to come out to them…[Q. 49: 2-5]

He then told them that one should treat a Sufi *murshid* just as one treats the Prophet, for a *murshid* is a successor of the Prophet. Expressing his bewilderment at their conduct, he rhetorically asked, "what kind of *murīd* smokes, jokes, and laughs in his *murshid*'s house?". He concluded his short impromptu lecture by stating that "following *ṭarīqa* means following the Prophet's *sunna.*" The room became silent and those who were waiting for Habib Luthfi lowered their heads.

In this example, we see an explicit instantiation of the *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism* involving explicit imposition of a code of conduct upon members of the *jamāʿa* in relation to their *murshid*. But what the Damascene *murshid* did not understand was that not all of those who were waiting to see Habib Luthfi were disciples. And even if they were disciples*,* Habib Luthfi is not the kind of *murshid* who micro-manages the interactional conduct of his *jamāʿa*, even in the hierarchically-structured space of his own home. Indeed the relaxed atmosphere of Habib Luthfi's house, the lack of strict interactional formality, and his tendency to accommodate, rather than to impose strict rules on his followers, are what drew different kinds of people from

heterogeneous backgrounds into his sphere of influence.[165] What this example points to is the different ways through which two *murshids* affiliated with the same *ṭarīqa* seek to order their *jamāʿas*. While both Habib Luthfi and the Damascene *murshid* posit the *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism*, they differ as to the actual techniques that ought to be deployed.

In the hierarchically-structured house of the *murshid*, a fast and easy access to Habib Luthfi can be an important source of authority for village-based *kyais* or community leaders, who come to Pekalongan with their own *jamāʿas*. The ability to provide such an access in turn validates their close connection to Habib Luthfi in the eyes of their *jamāʿas*. For example, an elderly man from Kudus (Central Java) referred to by his followers as Mbah Datuk regularly comes with his followers for the *kliwonan,* usually arriving one day prior to the event. Mbah Datuk always brings his followers straight up to the library, although there are fifty to sixty people. Knowing how Habib Luthfi respects Mbah Datuk, no one working in the house dares to stop him. Subsequently, I learnt that Mbah Datuk was a *guru kejawen*, a teacher of Javanese mysticism, who became a disciple of Habib Luthfi after being impressed by his knowledge of Javanese history and culture, when he visited Kudus for a speaking engagement. Mbah Datuk himself told me how from Habib Luthfi, he learnt that *kejawen* is actually Sufism and that there are no contradictions between the two. "So what is left for me is having a *silsilā* to the Prophet, which I finally received from Habib Luthfi," Mbah Datuk explained to me. According to Mbah Datuk, Habib Luthfi never told him to change his spiritual views. He only told Mbah Datuk to

[165] Habib Luthfi's pedagogical approach has been described to me by his followers as *ngemong. Ngemong* is a Javanese term, meaning gentle care. It entails tolerating improper behavior as long as it is within a clearly defined limit and abstaining from criticism. *Ngemong* is similar to *ngangon* or shepherding, in that a shepherd supervises his herds while providing them with freedom to move around within the limits of the grazing ground. As a pedagogical method, *ngemong* is usually contrasted to *mangku* or to put someone on one's lap. *Mangku* entails possession, protection, and control of its object, taking away its agency.

start praying in accordance to the *sunna* as it is "the best meditative technique" (*tehnik meditasi terbaik*).

One day, as I was sitting in the library, Mbah Datuk arrived with his entourage. He sat surrounded by his followers, and said to them, "see, if you come without me, you would all have to spend your night waiting for Habib down there." Whilst waiting for Habib Luthfi to come out of his bedroom, Mbah Datuk instructed his entourage — most of whom seem to be newcomers — regarding the correct form of address. "Call him Habib!" Mbah Datuk exclaimed. One of the followers replied, "Yes Mbah, we will call him Pak Habib (Mr. Habib)." "No, only Habib, or Bib, without the Pak," Mbah Datuk corrected the man. From this brief conversation, one can surmise that the followers of Mbah Datuk were unfamiliar with the Bā ʿAlawīs. Yet, they were able to become incorporated into Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* due to local leaders like Mbah Datuk who connect them with Habib Luthfi.

Actors like Mbah Datuk, in turn became connected to Habib Luthfi through the latter's unceasing speaking engagements in various parts of Java and his ability to articulate the *sunna* in ways that do not contradict, but supplement, the views of his audience. Habib Luthfi provides local community leaders like Mbah Datuk with a more cosmopolitan conceptual and symbolic frameworks — like *silsilā* and *ṭarīqa* belonging — through which they can situate themselves and their village-based *jamāʿa* within a spatially broader, historically deeper, and widely recognizable form of moral sociality. Such a translocal moral sociality is concretely performed through their attendance during the *kliwonan* and during their visit to the house of the *murshid*. It is also concretized through the *murshid*'s attendance in events hosted by these local community leaders. Thus, every year Mbah Datuk hosts his own *mawlid,* inviting Habib Luthfi for the

occasion. His ability to bring Habib Luthfi to the village in turn helps to strengthen his own standing not only among his followers, but also among other leaders in his locality, whether government functionaries, military officers, or *kyais.*

Heaven is Expensive

As an ordering mechanism*, ṭarīqa* provides a conceptual and symbolic framework through which a *murshid* can intervene in the personal matters of his *jamāʿa*. It is highly unlikely for scholars or jurists to unilaterally intervene in the personal matters of their students. Even a judge (*qāḍī*) of a *Sharīʿa* court can only adjudicate in matters that are brought to the bench (Rosen 1989). When one pledges one's allegiance to a *ṭarīqa*, however, one posits oneself as the spiritual child of the *murshid,* thereby theoretically allowing the *murshid* to unilaterally interfere in one's personal matters. The manual of the SA *ṭarīqa,* for instance, lists twenty five rules regarding the interaction between the disciples and their *murshid,* all of which hinge on the absolute obedience of the disciples towards their *murshid* (Bin Yahya 2006: 24-7). While Habib Luthfi hardly micro-manages the affairs of his *jamāʿa*, there are times when he explicitly invokes his authority as a *murshid* to interfere in the affairs of his students. Such cases in turn point explicitly to the social reality of *ṭarīqa* as an ordering mechanism.

One afternoon, I was sitting and conversing with Habib Luthfi in the library when the regent (*bupati*) of Purwokerto suddenly appeared, accompanied by another person. Habib Luthfi stood up to welcome them and invited them to sit. After a brief opening conversation, the companion of the regent, whose name was Ali, began complaining to Habib regarding a problem faced by the Muslims of Purwokerto: the absence of a Muslim cemetery. Ali told Habib Luthfi how Muslims in Purwokerto are buried together with people of different faiths. Several people in

the community had come up with an idea of collectively buying a large piece of land, roughly around two hectares, and endow it as a Muslim cemetery. A committee was formed with Ali as its head, and the land was successfully purchased. Yet there remained a problem of access to the land from the main road. The only way to open access to the land is by buying a small piece of land owned by a local *kyai.* After being approached several times, however, the *kyai* had persistently refused to sell the land. He told them that he will only sell the small piece of land if they are willing to buy his whole property, a total of seven thousand square meters. The *kyai* was also charging an astronomical price for it, which the committee simply could not afford. The *kyai* told the committee that having a cemetery by his property will decrease the value of his own land. The committee then persuaded the *kyai* using religious language, telling him the great rewards that God will grant him if he is willing to give up a little bit of his land for road access to the Muslim cemetery. In response, the *kyai* told the committee that "heaven is not cheap!"

Of course the *kyai* became a target of ridicule in the local community. Nonetheless, he remained unaffected. One person then told Ali that the *kyai* is actually a disciple of Habib Luthfi. Not knowing Habib Luthfi personally, the committee asked the help of the regent to connect them to Habib Luthfi, hence their joint visit. Having the regent allowed Ali to bypass the hierarchical structure of Habib Luthfi's house, granting him direct access to the *murshid*. Habib Luthfi listened attentively to Ali's complaints. He then told both visitors that he will try to deal with the situation. When the visitors left, Habib Luthfi called one of his attendants and told him to ring one of his *ṭarīqa* deputies in Purwokerto. On the phone, Habib Luthfi told his deputies to visit the *kyai* and let him know that he has been summoned to Pekalongan.

Two days later, the *kyai* came to Pekalongan. When he entered the library, Habib Luthfi was sitting with several guests. He welcomed the *kyai* warmly, asked about his family, and told him that he wanted to have a private conversation in the music studio. Both men went into the studio and around half an hour later they came out. The *kyai* kissed Habib Luthfi's hand and left. One week later, Ali returned to Habib Luthfi's house. He looked jubilant, telling Habib Luthfi that the *kyai* has agreed to sell a small piece of his land for road access to the cemetery. Ali thanked Habib Luthfi for his intervention, although Habib Luthfi told him that he had not taken any action due to his preoccupation with other matters. This case illustrates how as a *murshid,* Habib Luthfi is able to unilaterally intervene in the personal business matters of his disciples. Here, the *ṭarīqa* clearly functions as an ordering mechanism of the *jamāʿa*. We do not know what techniques of persuasion were used by Habib Luthfi during his private conversation with the *kyai*. Nevertheless, what was visible to the anthropologist, were the ways in which the framework of the *ṭarīqa* allowed Habib Luthfi to summon the *kyai* through one of his deputies and intervene, leading to the *kyai*'s consent to the purchase of part of his property.

Such an ability to intervene, however, is not always as simple. For instance, during my fieldwork there was a moment when a joint business venture between Habib Luthfi's son and one of his disciples turned sour. Each blamed the other for the failure and both took the case the father/*murshid*. This is a case where the lines separating the family from the *jamāʿa* become blurred, and Habib Luthfi simply refused to interfere. I have heard multiple times Habib Luthfi warning his children to not involve themselves with his *jamāʿa*. As a *murshid,* Habib Luthfi has to constantly maintain the boundary separating the family and *jamāʿa,* although such a line has

been transgressed multiple times, leaving him in difficult positions in relation to both his spiritual and biological children.

Ṣalawāt* is my *ṭarīqa, ṣalawāt* is my *murshid

In the preceding pages I have shown how a *ṭarīqa* is an *ordering mechanism* that seeks to stabilize networks into a standardized and hierarchically-structured proprietary *jamāʿa*. Differences between *ṭarīqas*, usually revolve around (1) contrastive *silsilās* that connect each *ṭarīqa* to the Prophet Muḥammad, and (2) their divergent views in regards to the legitimate formal, material, and organizational techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa*. These two variances have generated cleavages between Habib Luthfi and his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs who are committed to their family *ṭarīqa*, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*.

In the last chapter I have discussed how Habib Luthfi's affiliation to the NKS *ṭarīqa* did not endear him to his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs. In this chapter I have shown how Habib Luthfi attempted to address this ongoing problem by attempting to fuse his *silsilā* with that of the Bā ʿAlawī, among others, by identifying his teacher, Shaykh Abdul Malik, as a Bā ʿAlawī. Habib Luthfi also adopted the name ʿAlawiyya for his new *ṭarīqa*: *Ṭarīqa* Shādhilīyya-ʿAlawiyya. On several occasions, Habib Luthfi explained to me that the SA *ṭarīqa* is a synthesis of the *Ṭarīqa Shādhilīyya* and *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya.* Such an argument, however, has not been left unchallenged. During a gathering marking the opening of the new office of the Pekalongan branch of the Rabithah ʿAlawiyya — the premier association of the Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī (see: chapter 4) — one young Bā ʿAlawī publicly asked Habib Luthfi about the SA *ṭarīqa*. He asked Habib Luthfi on what grounds does he use the adjective *ʿAlawiyya* when there is nothing in the SA *ṭarīqa* that resembles the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Habib Luthfi responded that in its general meaning, the term

ʿAlawiyya refers to the descendants or followers of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the Prophet's son-in-law. Only in its specific meaning does the term refers to ʿAlawī b. ʿUbdaydillāh (d. 383/993), the eponymous ancestor of the Bā ʿAlawīs. As the *silsilā* of almost all Sufi *ṭarīqas,* including the *Ṭarīqa Shādhilīyya,* goes back to ʿAlī, they can be properly described using the adjective *ʿAlawiyya*.[166] The questioner was unimpressed by Habib Luthfi's response. Central to this is the function of *ṭarīqa,* particularly the *silsilā* as a proprietary practice. For the questioner, the adjective *ʿAlawiyya* ought to remain the exclusive property of the Bā ʿAlawīs. This interaction further illustrates how despite Habib Luthfi's attempt to be recognized as a spiritual authority by his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, the problem of diverging *silsilā* remains divisive.

Another cleavage between Habib Luthfi and his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs concerns the actual techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa*. As discussed in chapter two, since the late eighteenth century, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* has been redefined in terms of the Ḥaddādian paradigm and its project of constituting duplicable *jamāʿas* by advocating individual responsibility and minimizing collective indeterminacy through the propagation of a common theological, ethical, and devotional code accessible to self-conscious agentive subjects. Such a social assemblage demands connectors who can mediate between Prophetic *sunna* — as articulated in the *ʿaqāʾid, mukhtaṣar*, and *rātib* — and individual Muslims, who in the process become constituted as a *jamāʿa*. Such connectors are not necessarily *murshid*, but what I have described as *shaykh al-taʿlīm,* or instructing teachers. As a result, in contrast to Habib Luthfi's *ṭarīqa*, the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* as practiced in a place like Indonesia involves a different set of

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[166] Indeed ʿAlawī is an adjective of ʿAlī, thus ʿAlawī can either refer to the proper name of ʿAlawī b. ʿUbaydillāh, or a more general adjective of the followers or descendants of ʿAlī. The Bā ʿAlawīs, for instance, understand the adjective ʿAlawiyya as referring to the proper name of their eponym, ʿAlawī b. ʿUbaydillāh.

ordering mechanisms that do not necessarily seek to stabilize networks into a proprietary *jamāʿa*. For the Bā ʿAlawīs in Indonesia, the *ṭarīqa* is more akin to the loosely formulated spiritual path than an organized fraternity. As a result, many Bā ʿAlawī scholars — including the *manṣab* of Pekalongan — tend to be suspicious of organized *ṭarīqas.* In many cases they even actively and publicly discourage people from joining an organized *ṭarīqa* as the following case illustrates.

On the evening of the 10th of Muḥarram, I attended the ritual recitation of the *ʿĀshurāʾ* prayer at the al-Rawḍa mosque.[167] I arrived at the mosque around half an hour before the twilight prayer. The congregants were sitting quietly waiting for the call to prayer. The mosque was very bright. There were at least three dozen neon-lights illuminating the hall filled with people dressed in white. The aroma of expensive burnt aloe wood filled the air. The *manṣab*, Habib Bagir, sat quietly facing the congregation that spilled into the street. There were around three thousand people in attendance.

Around ten minutes before the call to prayer, Habib Bagir suddenly took the microphone and gave a short speech about the role of a Sufi *murshid* :

> A real *murshid* is almost impossible to find these days. But do not despair, because *ṣalawāt* (salutation to the Prophet) can serve as a substitute for a *murshid*. People today like to recite litanies liberally. I always remind people not to read Sufi litanies (*awrād*) freely. It can have dire consequences. I have seen many young people be shaken (*goncang*) after reciting litanies without properly understanding their sources. There are many people these days giving away litanies even when they do not have proper license/permission (*ijāza*). It is best to just recite the *ṣalawāt.* That is the best litany.

[167] While for Shiʿī Muslims the day marks the tragedy of Karbala, when the Prophet's grandson al-Ḥusayn and his family were massacred, Sunnī Muslims commemorate it as the Day of Atonement. The recitation of the *Āshurāʾ* prayer has been held annually since the time of the patron saint of Pekalongan, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās.

Habib Bagir then opened his electronic tablet and began to read in Arabic from it, without identifying the text that he was reciting. He then translated what he read into Indonesian. The text describes a set of criteria for becoming a *murshid.* Habib Bagir then said to the congregants:

> Many claim that they are *murshids,* but to be a real *murshid* requires heavy prerequisites. A *murshid* has to act in full accordance to the Prophetic *sunna*. A real *murshid* guides by acts (*bi-l-ḥāl*) and not merely by speech (*bi-l-maqāl*), let alone ceremonies (*upacara-upacara*). So in the absence of a true *murshid*, *ṣalawāt* is our best guide. *Ṣalawāt* mediates our connection with our Prophet. It bestows the light of Muḥammad on its reciters, and the light of Muḥammad is the best guide to the path of illumination. After all, the prophet is like a father to us. By establishing connection to him through *ṣalawāt*, we will receive his love, blessings, and guidance. Furthermore, *ṣalawāt* is easy to perform. It does not need intention (*niat*), it does not need license (*ijāza*) and you do not need to be initiated (*bayʿa*) to recite the *ṣalawāt*.

It is unclear whether Habib Bagir had Habib Luthfi and his *jamāʿa* in mind when he delivered the speech. The relationship between the two has certainly not been ideal, as I will discuss in the next chapter. What is important to note for the present purpose is precisely how the speech articulates a divergent view in regards to the legitimate formal, material, and organizational techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa*. Both Habib Luthfi and Habib Bagir belong to a *ṭarīqa*. Nevertheless they differ on how such an ordering mechanism ought to operate. Once, I was having a conversation with a young Javanese who is an ardent follower of the *manṣab*. I have seen him in many Bā ʿAlawī gatherings whether in Pekalongan or in other parts of Java. During our conversation I asked him about his *ṭarīqa* affiliation. I was under the impression that he would say *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. But to my surprise, the said, "my *ṭarīqa* is *ṣalawāt*." So I asked him whether he has a *murshid*, and he said, "my *murshid* is *ṣalawāt.*" What is interesting is that such replies came from someone who always attends the gatherings of the Bā ʿAlawīs. He himself told me that he regularly recites the litanies of the Bā ʿAlawīs like the *rātib* of al-Ḥaddād and al-ʿAṭṭās. Yet despite his affiliation with the Bā ʿAlawīs and his

performance of the litanies of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*, he did not identify himself as a member of the *ṭarīqa.* One may suggest that this is because he is not a Bā ʿAlawī, thereby excluding him from the lineage of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya,* although I have also heard similar explanation given to me by a Bā ʿAlawī.

This is not uncommon among the Bā ʿAlawīs in Pekalongan or in other parts of Java who continue to view organized *ṭarīqa* as problematic. Indeed, rooted in the Ḥaddādian paradigm, it has been the dominant view among the Bā ʿAlawīs of Indonesia as expressed among others by the traveling Ḥaddādian *shaykh al-taʿlīm* like ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar ibn Yaḥyā (see: chapter 2). Such a view was most famously articulated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, by the Bā ʿAlawī luminary and self-proclaimed *mufti* of Batavia, Uthmān b. ʿAbdallāh bin Yaḥyā (d. 1914) (Kaptein 2014: 106-120), to the extent that one historian mistakenly describes him as someone with "strong reservations about Sufism" (Azra 1997: 258). What is at stake is not Sufism, but the diverging views on how *ṭarīqa* as an *ordering mechanism* ought to operate.

During my conversation with Habib Luthfi, he himself agreed that the Bā ʿAlawīs did not usually initiate the masses into the *ṭarīqa*. Nevertheless he told me that in the present era, there is a real need for linking the masses to a *silsilā* precisely to encourage them to become better Muslims:

> Many believe that one should learn and observe Islamic law before entering a *ṭarīqa*. That is the view of our Bā ʿAlawī masters (*sadātunā al-bā ʿalawi*). In the view of this destitute (*al-faqīr*), however, initiating people into the *ṭarīqa,* even when they have not learnt or observed Islamic law, has in fact encouraged them to learn and observe Islamic law. Having a *silsilā* encourages people to learn about, and devote themselves to the *sharīʿa*.

The disagreement between Habib Luthfi and the Bā ʿAlawīs thus revolves not only around their divergent *silsilā*, but also about the legitimate formal, material, and organizational techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa.*

Conclusion

Let me conclude this chapter by reiterating two vivid historical descriptions, one relating to an eleventh century Persian Sufi lodge and the other relating to the first Islamic polity in Java, the Demak Sultanate. In his *Sufism: A Global History*, the historian Nile Green shows how in their developments, the Sufi lodges of the eleventh century Khurasan began to take on some characteristics of the royal court, and the Sufi masters themselves became increasingly seen as spiritual aristocrats. Describing the famous Persian Sufi master Abū Saʿīd ibn Abī al-Khayr (d. 440/1049), Green writes:

> Dwelling in the lodge of which he was master; surrounded by a band of men who had sworn to obey his every command; protecting the poor who sought the safety of his shadow; receiving grandees and princes as though he were one of their rank; enjoying the courtly pleasures of music and verses: all of these activities are found in abundance in the two biographies of Abū Saʿīd written in the century after his death (2012: 60).

When I first read this description, I was struck by their remarkable resemblance with my own experience of being at the center of a living and growing *ṭarīqa*. Like the lodge of Abū Saʿīd, the house and congregational center of Habib Luthfi became an open, hierarchically-structured, and culturally rich and colorful center of a proprietary *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa*, where both horizontal and vertical bonds are continually reproduced.

Central to the maintenance of such a stable social formation is the notion of *ṭarīqa*, which I have defined as a conceptual, symbolic, and material *ordering mechanism of a jamāʿa. Ṭarīqa* is an ongoing project of reproducing networks into a durable hierarchically-structured social

formation that materializes as a social reality beyond the interpersonal encounters between its participants. Several constitutive elements of this *ordering mechanism* are the initiation ceremonies or oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*), *dhikr* manuals, physical congregational centers, and regular ritual events. Positing *ṭarīqa* as an ordering mechanism in turn opens our analysis of the differences and contestations between *ṭarīqas* not only in terms of their different *silsilā*, but more importantly, in terms of their divergent views regarding the legitimate formal, material, and organizational techniques that ought to be deployed in ordering a *jamāʿa*.

Insofar as a *ṭarīqa* — like other Islamic social formations — involves teachings and practices about being human that also attempt to reproduce and extend interpersonal relations, it is fundamentally a political project. The capacity of a *ṭarīqa* to provide a *jamāʿa* with a conceptual and organizational social framework that — at least theoretically — demands absolute allegiance to a living leader who can unilaterally interfere in the personal affairs of his flock and has generated tensions with another socio-political formations with similar ambitions and claims, namely, the state. Indeed the long history of organized *ṭarīqa* in different parts of the Muslim world has shown various forms of tensions and even violent struggles with the state. In the history the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, different *ṭarīqas* have been involved in open contestations with indigenous Islamic polities as well as with the colonial states.

But the history of Java — like in many other parts of the Muslim world — has also shown how *ṭarīqas* and the state can cooperate and produce a powerful, if not, hegemonic formation. To illustrate this point, let me turn to the second description, which comes from a nineteenth-century Javanese court chronicle from the *kraton* (royal court) of Surakarta. The description depicts the annual celebration (*garebeg*) of *mawlid* held at the capital of the Islamic

Sultanate of Demak, which since then has remained the most important public state ceremony of the Javanese *kratons*, whereby all of the aristocrats, state officials, and provincial vassals were required to gather and pay homage and taxes to the monarch:

> In the capital Demak with the coming/Of the month Rabingu'awwal [Rabīʿ I]/ Assemble did the *wali* [saints] all/ And the *mufti* and *sulakha*/ The *ulama, kukamah* [*ḥukamāʾ,* the wise] and *ngabid* [slaves/worshippers/ascetics]/ The great and mighty pundits/ With all the ascetics too/ Assembled in Demak, together one and all/ And all the prince-regent/ The nobles and high courtiers/ The princes-regent of the outer realms/ All assembled in Demak/ As was customary/ Every Rabingu'awal/ They came; thus it came to pass/ On the twelfth of the month/ They recited *The Prophet's Nativity*/ In the Grand Mosque of Demak/ In spirited song they sang in verse/ The ancient tales in voices redolent/ The Lord Sultan of Demak/ Sang in refrain with the mighty *wali*/ When their *tahlilan* [*tahlīl*, chanting the Islamic creedal sentence] was done/ They sat to feasts replete/ On the morn then the procession/ Garebegan proceeded in parade/ Teeming the subjects great and low/ Were arrayed: a crowded sea/ Filling the Alun-alun [the main public square] brim full/ Over they spilled to the by-ways/ Thronging in unbroken streams/ Like a leafy young forest lush/ The grand parade of subjects from all of Java's land/ Loomed like a long lolling darkening cloud/ Pressed in crowded crush/ In swarming teeming mass/ Like a thunderhead on high/ With darkness, covering all the sky (Florida 1995: 183-4).

Like the *kraton*, the congregational center of a *ṭarīqa* also hosts an annual *mawlid* celebration, wherein all of the *murshid's* deputies and disciples are expected to attend, bearing gifts and other votive offerings to their spiritual leader. Indeed the annual *mawlid* of a *ṭarīqa* is the moment when the *ṭarīqa*'s existence as a social reality is most visible. During the annual *mawlid* of the *Kanzus Shalawat*, for example, around one hundred fifty thousand people flock the main roads of Pekalongan. Even the Indonesian President himself has several times joined the celebration or sent his formal envoy.[168] But what the above account accentuates is the creation of an expansive and powerful socio-political formation through the collaboration between Sufi saints or scholars,

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[168] Two Indonesian Presidents have attended Habib Luthfi's annual *mawlid*: Abdurahman Wahid (in office 1999-2001) and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (in office 2004-2014). President Yudhoyono have attended the *mawlid* twice as president. When he was unable to attend, he sent one or two of his ministers or chief-of-staff to attend on his behalf.

and the state. The description defies the attempt to refer to powerful political formation as stemming from "the specific logic of a single social force" (Laclau and Mouffe [1985] 2001: 142). Similar collaboration has also been the driving force behind the spectacular growth and the consolidation of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* that extends even beyond his *ṭarīqa* circle. At the same time, it also points to the various ways in which different apparatuses of the modern nation-state have continued to work with other non-state social formation, like the *ṭarīqa*, in realizing and maintaining the contradictory presence of the state. Such collaborations require the dispersion and the intermingling of different — and often contradictory — grammars of the political. It is to these collaborations that we now turn.

Chapter VII

Santris, Soldiers, and the State

> Hold to the now, the here, through which all future plunges to the past
>
> -James Joyce, *Ulysses.*

> Where two principles really do meet which cannot be reconciled with one another, then each man declares the other a fool and an heretic. I said I would 'combat' the other man, — but wouldn't I give him reasons? Certainly; but how far do they go? At the end of reasons comes *persuasions*.
>
> - Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*

On the night of June 18, 2012, Simpang Lima — the main city square of the Central Javanese capital of Semarang — was flooded by thousands of people who had come to attend a *mawlid* (Birthday of Prophet Muḥammad) celebration jointly organized by the *Kanzus Shalawat* and the Kodam (*Komando Daerah Militer,* Military Area Commands) of Central Java. From afar, the crowd looked like a sea of green and white, from the green berets and white *pecis* (prayer cap) worn by the military personnel and the civilians. During the recitation of the *mawlid,* Habib Luthfi sat quietly next to the Pangdam — the commander of the Kodam —, Major-General Mulhim Asyrof, while other Bā ʿAlawīs and *kyais* took turn in reciting chapters from the *mawlid*

text.[169] Following the recitation of the *mawlid* text, Habib Luthfi delivered a speech on the importance of establishing synergies between the soldiers and the *santris.*[170]

> We need to learn from the history of the Java War.[171] We need to remember how Prince Dipanegara was able to turn the Dutch topsy turvy (*kocar kacir*). That was because he was able to unite the *santris* and the soldiers, the *ʿulama* and the generals, for the glory of the nation (*bangsa*). But when the Dutch succeeded in sowing disunity between *santris* and soldiers, or within the *santris* and within the *soldiers*, the great force of Prince Dipanegara was defeated. We should not let this happen again. Indonesia will stand gloriously when the *santris* and the TNI [Indonesian National Armed Forces] stand together hand in hand. This evening, we stand to realize the dream (*harapan*) of Pangeran Dipanegara. This evening we the *santris*, stand hand in hand with our brothers from the Kodam IV Dipanegara.[172]

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[169] During the New Order period, the Indonesian Armed Forces — particularly the army —was directly involved in politics, justified by the doctrine of dual function (*dwifungsi*). On the one hand, the military functioned to preserve internal and external security and safeguard the sovereignty of the state. On the other hand, it served as an overseer and arbiter of government policy, thereby justifying their substantial presence and interference in politics. Thus the military reserved seats in the parliament. Its interference in politics trickled down from the center to the smallest territorial units forming a military area command based on the German *Wehrkreise* system. Thus the chain of command flowed directly from the President/Commander-in-Chief (*Pangti*), through the commander of the Armed Forces (*Pangab*) who held a political position equal to the cabinet ministers, to ten Military Regional Commands (Kodam), some of which oversee one province and others, more than one province. Each Kodam commands two to three Military Territorial Commands (Korem) in the level of the old Dutch territorial unit: the residencies (*keresidenan*). Each Korem commands the Military District Commands (Kodim) based on each regency (*kabupaten*) that make up the province. The chain of command ends in the Military Sub-District Command (Koramil) nested in each district that make up a regency. The Kodam, Korem, Kodim, and Koramil are headed by a commander (Pangdam, Danrem, Dandim, Danramil respectively) who extends his influence over the government of the province, residency, regency, and district, thereby forming a hierarchy of military area command that directly parallels governmental structure. While the doctrine of the dual function of the military was finally ended under the rubric of "New Paradigm," following the abrupt end of the New Order regime and the military vacated their seats in the parliament, the military area command structure remains in place. On the ground, at least from my own observation during my fieldwork, the Pangdam, Danrem, Dandim, and Danramil still exercise symbolic if not real power in the daily life of the community. For more on the Indonesian Armed Forces under and after the New Order, see: Crouch [1978] 2007; Rinakit 2005.

[170] As stated in earlier chapter, the word *santri* refers to Muslims who practice what is considered to be 'orthodox' Islam. The term also refers to *pesantren* students. In the case of Habib Luthfi, he tends to use the term exclusively to refer to traditionalist Muslims, those who are affiliated with the Nahdlatul 'Ulama (NU).

[171] Regarding the Java War, see: chapter 1.

[172] The Kodam of Central Java is the fourth of the ten Kodams, hence it is generally referred to as Kodam IV. Each Kodam also takes the name of a local hero or historical leaders. Thus the Kodam of West Java is known as Kodam III Siliwangi, from the name of the ruler of a local pre-Islamic kingdom who reigned between 1482 to 1521. The Kodam of East Java is known as Kodam V Brawijaya, named after the dynasty of the pre-Islamic kingdom of Majapahit with its seat in East Java. The Kodam of Central Java, took the name of Prince Dipanegara, who as discussed in chapter 1, led the Java War of 1825 to 1830.

The event ended with a ceremony of commencing (*upacara pelepasan*) the journey of a contingent — made up of ten Qurʾān memorizers (*ḥuffāẓ*) and ten military personnels from the Kodam — that had been given the task of producing through pilgrimage what Habib Luthfi described to the audience as sacred flags (*bendera keramat,* meaning a flag that possesses supernatural qualities). Each carrying a national flag, Habib Luthfi, General Asyrof and several other dignitaries ceremoniously handed six flags to members of the contingent. The contingent was instructed to bring the flags to each of the tombs of the nine saints of Java, the *wali sanga*, where they would be placed by the tomb for one whole night, while the Qurʾān memorizers recited the entirety of the Qurʾān in their presence (as there are thirty parts, or *juz*ʿ of the Qurʾān, this means that each of the ten memorizers would recite three parts). The contingent would then travel to the next tomb and repeat the process. They would then divide and return the six national flags — now sacralized through both their proximity to the saintly remains and the voicing of the Divine speech — to both the Kodam and the *Kanzus Shalawat,* where they would be kept and paraded on certain occasions.

Figure 7.1: Habib Luthfi and General Asyrof handing the national flags to members of the contingent, Semarang, Central Java.

The foregoing description calls for a rethinking of the ways in which we understand the political in the context of a modern nation-state. The modern conception of the nation has been posited most famously as an *imagined community* (Anderson [1983] 1991), a horizontal form of solidarity facilitated by a novel conception of temporal simultaneity — mediated by, among others, print capitalism — occurring within the pervasiveness of what has been described as "homogeneous, empty time" (Benjamin 1968: 261), or "secular time" (Taylor 2007) that envelops other kinds of time. Together with the dominance of instrumental rationality, such a temporal order, constituted what Charles Taylor calls the *immanent frame* (2007: 542), that is,

"an objectification of social reality as governed by its own laws" (*Ibid*: 543), which allows for the efficacies of collective human action and secular politics. Such a conception of the political, however, overlooks the temporal multiplicities that people must negotiate in their daily lives and which consequently keep them divided (de Certeau 1984; Harootunian 2000; Roberts 2006). It neglects the various ways in which people within a nation have continued to actively construct divergent temporal and spatial orders by means that include, among others, linguistic practice (Basso 1996; Mugler 2001; Keane 2007; Schieffelin 2014), travel and mobility (Munn 1992; Coleman & Eade 2004; Ho 2006; Stasch 2011; Stasch 2015), and memorialization (Rappaport 1990; Laquier 1994; White 2004; Feldman 2007), some of which challenge the pervasiveness of secular time and the givenness of the assumption that "human is ontologically singular, that gods and spirits are in the end 'social facts'" (Chakrabarty 2000: 16). Nevertheless, the propensity in recovering these alternatives has been to locate such practices in the "zones of occult instability where the people dwell" — to use Frantz Fanon's phrase (1967:183) — while positing them *in opposition* to the state's conquest of space and domestication of time (Skurski & Coronil 2006).[173] Less attention has been given to the ways in which the state is implicated and redefined by such practices.

Despite persistent analytical and ideological attempts to project the modern nation-state as a leviathan, in reality it has never been a monolithic all-encompassing entity. A nation-state is a socio-political project, involving both desires for a reality and concrete attempts to achieve such desires, that has achieved a status of hyperreality by being semiotically *instantiated* in

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[173] Thus one influential critique of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities,* offers a psychoanalytic diagnosis of the nation as suffering from an ambivalent split between the state and the people, between "the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative" (Bhabha 1994: 209)

diverse, and often contradictory institutions, apparatuses, discourses, practices, and material objects.[174] As a result, despite continuous attempts to regiment these constitutive elements, the modern nation-state is experienced in multiple ways by distinct actors in different localities.[175] Certainly the modern nation-state's ambition to regulate all aspects of individual life through the instrument of the law and its requirement for every type of social activity to receive its consent has redefined and reordered human socialities by "making them all equally political" (Asad 2003: 199). Nevertheless, for state law to be present and efficacious, it needs to be personified in the figures of the surveillance, enforcement, and judicial agents, materialized in a range of physical structures (what lies behind Kafka's gate of law? another gate and gate-keeper?), and circulated through a wide-range of semiotic forms, all of which facilitate, destabilize, create confusions, and impose limits on the expansion and consolidation of the nation-state, while subjecting it to the heterogeneity and messiness of social life (Das 2007; Hull 2012).[176] The modern nation-state maintains its presence and expands *through* its own unevenly structured and distributed instantiations *in* an open and diverse social terrain where it coexists, intermingles, and becomes associated with other socio-political projects and relations embodying multiple grammars of the political.

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[174] My usage of the term *instantiation* is informed by Quentin Meillassoux's discussion on the difference between the notion of *instantiation* on the one hand, and *exemplification* and *manifestation* on the other. An entity is said to be *instantiated* by *x* when that entity does not exist apart from its individuation. In contrast, an entity is *exemplified* or *manifested* by *x* if the entity still exists even without the particular individuation. Thus, in Platonic philosophy, the entity 'man' is merely *exemplified* and *manifested* by an individual as the archetype 'man' exists in the realm of Ideas (Meillassoux 2008: 25).

[175] Recall Gramsci's (1971: 530-1) discussion of the French and Italian expressions "the State as *veilleur de nuit* (night-watchman)" and "the state as policeman," both of which allude to how historically in the rural areas, the presence of the state was personified by, and experienced by the villagers through the figure of the village policeman, sheriff, or bailiff.

[176] "Look at this, Willem, he admits he doesn't know the law and at the same time insists he's innocent," says one of the officials who had come to arrest Joseph K in Kafka's *The Trial*.

Like every other socio-political project, the ideally coherent presence of the state is established through *articulatory practice* — i.e. "the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning" (Laclau & Mouffe [1985] 2001: 113) — between its constitutive and often contradictory instantiations. Achieving dominance, however, demands articulatory practice between instantiations of the state and other social formations (like a Sufi *ṭarīqa*), thereby allowing the displacement, entanglement, and regular dispersion of meaning. Such a process is what is exemplified by the *mawlid* jointly organized by *Kanzus Shalawat* and Kodam IV Dipanegara. The event illustrates how dominance of the state "cannot be referred to the specific logic of a single force" (*Ibid*: 142) but is constructed relationally *vis-à-vis* other non-state projects and social formations, which open the former into concrete negotiations with other particulars. It follows that such an *articulatory practice* between the military as an instantiation of the state and a Sufi *ṭarīqa* allows the latter — through its connection with the former — to expand its presence in its attempt to achieve dominance. Events like the *mawlid* in Semarang thus maintain and expand the visible presence of the state, while simultaneously coloring it with elements and practices of a Sufi *ṭarīqa* (the recitation of *mawlid,* national flag becoming an Islamic sacred flag through devotional practice), thereby filling up the purportedly "homogeneous, empty time" of the nation-state with other previously banished actors (spirits of the Prophet and the nine saints of Java) and temporalities (the Qurʾān as the eternal speech of God). Conversely, it also colors the *ṭarīqa* with statist elements.

In this penultimate chapter, I examine several successful and failed *articulatory practices* between Habib Luthfi and institutions/actors instantiating the state and operating on different scales: the military, the mayor, the regent, and the village head. Habib Luthfi's collaboration with

the military has enabled him to further expand his *jamāʿa* into new areas and to incorporate people from outside his *ṭarīqa* circle into his sphere of influence. However, persistent contestation with the *manṣab* and other local *kyais* over the religious leadership of Pekalongan, together with various entanglements with local electoral politics that have resulted in conflicts with other state institutions, have continued to pose barriers for Habib Luthfi and his *jamāʿa* to achieving a position of complete dominance over the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan.

The Military *Murshid*

The resignation of President Soeharto in 1998 who had ruled Indonesia for thirty-two years began the extraordinary transformation of the country from being a centralized authoritarian state into a decentralized democracy. Soeharto's vice-president, B.J. Habibie became Indonesia's third president and laid the foundation for the country's experiment with democracy by arranging for free and fair national elections and allowing for the proliferation of political parties. During the New Order Period only three parties were allowed to exist: the Islamic-oriented PPP, Golkar, and the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, PDI). In the lead up to the 1999 general elections, up to forty eight parties were declared, including two major Islamic-oriented parties: the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN) led by the former chairman of the modernist organization Muhammadiyah, and the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa) led by the former leader of NU and the grandson of its founder, Abdurahman Wahid (d. 2009). The proliferation of Islamic political parties divided Muslim scholars and their *jamāʿas* who during the New Order were affiliated with the PPP.

Pekalongan was one of the hotbeds of partisan politics. Traditionalist Muslims, who form the majority of the population, were divided between those who remained loyal to the PPP and

those who joined the newly formed PKB. *Kyais* loyal to the PPP began verbally attacking their colleagues who joined the new party from the pulpits and vice versa. During the campaign season (*musim kampanye*) in May 1999, seventeen clashes were reported in Pekalongan between supporters of PPP and PKB. On May 29 1999, a big fight broke out between the two camps involving the use of hydrochloric acid, stones, and air rifles (*Jakarta Post,* 05/31/1999). Eleven people were injured and several homes and motorcycles were put to fire. The police and the military had to be deployed on the streets of Pekalongan to maintain order.

The May 1999 clashes shattered the unity of the established traditionalist *kyais* of Pekalongan. This in turn provided Habib Luthfi with the opportunity to mediate between the conflicting camps, particularly between the traditionalist *kyais* of Pekalongan who for long had perceived him as a political adversary. Following the end of the New Order, Habib Luthfi disassociated himself from Golkar and refused invitations to join any political party. Instead he worked closely with the police and the military, particularly following the abolition of the "dual-function" doctrine in 2000 which marked the end — at least theoretically — of the military's political involvement. As stated in chapter five, Habib Luthfi had established close connection to the military since the early 1980s. He had maintained and expanded such connections throughout the 1990s, and after 2000, he began to actively mediate the relationship between the military and the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan who had been traumatized by more than thirty years of military repression.

This was done through, among others, Habib Luthfi's adoption of nationalist discourse. In his sermons, Habib Luthfi consistently spoke about the danger of "party fanaticism" (*fanatisme kepartaian*) and the need to establish harmonious relation with the

military, positing them as the apolitical warden of the nation. Every time Habib Luthfi was invited to speak at an event, he brought at least one military officer with him, and asked him to address the audience. Officers of the local military administration were also invited to join the executive board of the *Kanzus Shalawat*. Consequently, the military began to see Habib Luthfi as an important ally, particularly due to his ability to mediate and mend its fractured relationship with local *kyais* and their *jamāʿas*.

In cooperation with the military, Habib Luthfi instituted a ritual event that became known as *mawlid-gebyar merah putih* (mawlid-splendor of red and white). First instituted in 2005, the event consists of a recitation of the *mawlid* preceded by a parade of military, police, and Banser personnels together with local *pesantren* students. They parade carrying the national flag while singing patriotic songs to the accompaniment of marching bands. The parade was initially hosted at the *Kanzus Shalawat* one day before the annual *mawlid* celebration. Every year, Habib Luthfi invites government ministers and generals from Jakarta for the occasion. He also asks members of the community to stage their own cultural performances during the parade, like the Chinese community of Pekalongan who stage the lion dance for the occasion. The parade is organized in militaristic fashion. Habib Luthfi and other dignitaries sit on a grandstand, receiving the salutes of the parading soldiers, police, Banser, veterans, and *pesantren* students.

Figure 7.2: Habib Luthfi leading a military parade (03/09/2012). In this photo he is instructing the subdistrict military commander (Danramil) of East Pekalonga to begin the parade.

Figure 7.3: Military personnels parading for the annual *mawlid* of *Kanzus Shalawat* (03/09/2012)

Subsequently, the combination of *mawlid* recitation and nationalistic military parade is organized in different localities in Pekalongan and other parts of Java where Habib Luthfi's deputies and disciples reside. Each of these recurring events was organized by Habib Luthfi's deputies and disciples, together with local military officers and local *kyais,* and attended by local government functionaries and the general public. Habib Luthfi himself attends these events whenever they are held and delivers the final sermon.The event usually concludes with Habib Luthfi leading the congregants in singing patriotic songs. In his address at one of these events

held in the regency of Brebes (Central Java) in June 2012, Habib Luthfi explained that the parade had to be instituted because "the colorful flags of political parties have become more dominant in public space than our own red and white, our national flag." At the same time, he noted that it is important to combine the parade with the *mawlid* "to instill nationalism among Muslim youths and to show the world that Indonesian Muslims are nationalist." During a *kliwonan* held in July 2011, Habib Luthfi told his *jamāʿa* that whenever they organize an annual *mawlid* in their localities, they should work with local military commands to organize a *gebyar merah putih*. Thus the combination of *mawlid* and *gebyar merah putih* has increasingly become a norm in the *mawlid* events organized by Habib Luthfi's deputies or disciples.[177]

Figure 7.4: *Gebyar Merah Putih* in Jepara, Central Java (01/12/2012)

[177] One wealthy disciple from Magelang (Central Java) who organizes a big annual *mawlid* at his house told me that one way to ensure the attendance of the constantly preoccupied Habib Luthfi is by organizing the parade together with the *mawlid,* as "he always prioritizes events with nationalistic content (*kandungan nasionalisme*)".

Figure 7.5: Habib Luthfi leading the *Gebyar Merah Putih* in Jepara, Central Java (01/12/2012)

Figure 7.6: Preparation for *Mawlid-gebyar merah-putih,* Pekalongan (03/09/2012)

Figure 7.7: Habib Luthfi, in military tunic, delivering a speech at the headquarters of Kodam IV Diponegoro, Semarang (05/25/2012)

The *Mawlid-gebyar merah putih* generates excitement in the wider community, attracting members of the society who do not traditionally attend a *mawlid* recitation like secular nationalists, modernist Muslims, or even military and police personnels. At the same time it provides an opportunity for Habib Luthfi's disciples and other local *kyais* to work closely with local military commands or government functionaries, thereby achieving his objective of mending their fractured relationship. This recurring event also provides a common non-partisan platform of interaction for *kyais* who are affiliated with different political parties. By organizing such an event, Habib Luthfi has been able to establish himself firmly among many traditionalist *kyais* who were previously hostile to him. For both the *kyais* and the military, Habib Luthfi has

become an important non-partisan intermediary. As we will see in the next section, this particular innovation becomes central to exacerbating the polarization of the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan.

Expansion to the Hinterlands

When I began my fieldwork in May 2011, the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan had become polarized into two competing factions, each recognizing either the *manṣab,* namely, Habib Bagir, or Habib Luthfi as the preeminent Islamic leader of Pekalongan.[178] While people in Pekalongan tend to articulate the dividing line between the two factions in terms of legitimate leadership, the contestation between the two factions is more complex. It relates to different *articulatory practices* and conflicts with various state and non-state actors, as well as with Muslim and non-Muslim others, involving diverging ritual practices, territorial expansion, and local politics. At the center of this polarization is the proliferation and expansion of Habib Luthfi's *Mawlid-gebyar merah putih,* that became known locally as the *Rangkaian Maulid Kanzus Shalawat* (the *Kanzus Shalawat mawlid* network, RMKS) as each event is affiliated with and held after the annual *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*. By 2012, there were more than one hundred such events organized annually. While the events are organized by Habib Luthfi's disciples all over Java, most are within the city and regency of Pekalongan. To some, this was taken as Habib Luthfi's

[178] Theoretically, Sunni Islam does not require the existence of a preeminent Islamic leader whose authority ought to be recognized by other Muslim leaders of scholars. Sociologically speaking, however, there seemed to be a need for such a figure, at least among the traditionalist Muslim leaders and scholars in Pekalongan. The sense I got was that having such a figure allows local leaders and scholars to refer to him in addressing controversial or contentious issues, thereby displacing the burden of responsibility to such a preeminent leader. The two biggest Muslim organizations in Indonesia, the Nahdlatul 'Ulama and the Muhammadiyah, have their own supreme council of scholars precisely to help local scholars and leaders address difficult issue. Indonesia also has a Council of Muslim scholars for a similar purpose. Oftentimes, however, the process of referring to such institutions can be long winded, inefficient, and subject to the increasingly complex bureaucracy. At the same time, the process tends to be depersonalized. As such, local Muslim scholars in Pekalongan seem to be more willing to consult local scholars like Habib Luthfi or the *manṣab* — who theoretically are more familiar with local social dynamics — on difficult matters that they are facing.

expansion into their territories and spheres of influence. This in turn suggest how the formation and maintenance of a *jamāʿa* tend involve disrupting and capturing other *jamāʿas*.

For example, the family of *kyai* Tahir of Buaran — who once publicly denounced Habib Luthfi following his decision to join Golkar (see chapter 5) — perceives the expansion of the RMKS as impinging on their own *jamāʿas* and territory. *Kyai* Tahir's son, Gus Anis who took over his father's leadership position following his death in 2005, denounced the RMKS as resembling the older Golkar-Military-MDI project. Other *kyais* criticize the new ritual as an ostentatious waste of money. Being funded by each hosting locality, the RMKS burdens the local population who have to raise money to stage the event. The local *kyais* who oppose Habib Luthfi's expansion rally around the *manṣab* who, in their view, ought to remain as the preeminent Islamic leader of Pekalongan.

The expansion of the RMKS into the regency of Pekalongan does not only posit a challenge to some of the local *kyais* who choose to remain in opposition of Habib Luthfi, it also impinges on the authority of the *manṣab* who for long has been recognized by those living in the regency as the only credible Bā ʿAlawī religious authority (see: chapter 4). The expansion of the RMKS has facilitated Habib Luthfi's entry into territories that had been under the *manṣab*'s sphere of influence and has given him important sources of income. Many local *kyais* and wealthy entrepreneurs from the regency have begun to frequent *Kanzus Shalawat* rather than the *al-Rawḍa* mosque. Whenever they host their own *mawlid* or other religious events they choose to invite Habib Luthfi rather than the *manṣab*. For local actors, hosting an event as part of the RMKS ensures a large turnout, festivity, and direct assistance from the local military personnel.

Through the RMKS, Habib Luthfi has also been able to incorporate many Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan into his circle. As discussed in chapter four, for a long time, only the *manṣab* and his immediate family were recognized as the Bā ʿAlawī ritual specialists by people in the regency. Indeed, when the *manṣab* and his immediate family led rituals in different parts of the regency, they never invited other Bā ʿAlawīs. In contrast, Habib Luthfi asked the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan — most of whom are not scholars — to lead the recitation of the *mawlid* in all RMKS events. At first only those who came from the older and more Javanized families — the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayis* — like the Bā Shaybān, the Bā ʿAbud, and the Bin Yaḥyā were willing to join. Gradually, some members of other Bā ʿAlawī families, like the al-Shahāb and the al-ʿAṭṭās also joined. Through the mediation of Habib Luthfi, these Bā ʿAlawīs became recognized as ritual specialists among the traditionalist Muslims of the regency, even without the necessary training. They are treated just as the *manṣab* has been treated, welcomed with drummed processions and invited to sit on the stage. Whenever Habib Luthfi speaks during such events, he introduces these Bā ʿAlawīs as the descendants of the Prophet who need to be respected and revered. By leading the rituals of the RMKS, these Bā ʿAlawīs are also able to benefit from the prayer economy (Soares 2005). Their names have become known in the villages around Pekalongan, and are subsequently invited whenever the villagers hosted events marking rites of passage or Islamic holidays. As their popularity hinges on Habib Luthfi's mediation, they in turn become loyal to *Kanzus Shalawat*.

Such a practice of mediation is usually described by people in Pekalongan as *mengorbitkan*, from the English word ‘orbit,’ meaning, elevating a person to prominence, just like launching a spacecraft from earth to move in orbit around a planet. These Bā ʿAlawīs are

known as those who have been elevated by Habib Luthfi — *diorbitkan oleh Habib Luthfi* — and have become known to others as religious authorities and ritual specialists. For example, Salim comes from the Bā ʿAlawī *priyayi* family of Bā Shaybān. In his younger days, Salim worked selling camphor (*kapur barus*) at the local market. Nothing in his physical appearance betrays his Ḥaḍramī descent, and he was simply known as Salim the camphor merchant. Today, along with other Bā ʿAlawīs, Salim actively participates in leading the rituals of the RMKS. One evening, as Salim was descending the stage following a *mawlid* event in a village in the regency, one local elderly lady who attended the ritual by the name of Lik Siti came up to him with a big smile. She tapped Salim's shoulder and told him jovially in coarse Javanese, "Lim [short for Salim] you have now become a Habib" (*Lim kowe saiki wes dadi habib yo*). Salim was glad to see her and they began a long friendly conversation. It turns out that she was Salim's loyal customer when he was still active in the market. Notice, however, that Lik Siti still address him as Salim without using the honorific Habib. For many people in the villages of the regency, being a habib is synonymous with being a *kyai*, that is, one can learn and become one. Habib, for many Javanese in the villages, is a title for an Arab *kyai*, rather than the genealogical title of a Bā ʿAlawī. In response to Lik Siti, Salim told her, "since I was born I was already a habib" (*lha wong kadik lahir wes dadi habib*). Through recurring events like the RMKS and through Habib Luthfi's active mediation, people in the villages of the regency have become more familiar with the Bā ʿAlawī as a lineage.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that these new Bā ʿAlawī ritual specialists are not automatically accepted by the traditionalist Muslim publics simply because they are Bā ʿAlawīs or because they are mediated by Habib Luthfi. They also need to have certain skills in leading

ritual recitations. For example, during one RMKS event, one of the Bā ʿAlawīs who sat on the stage was invited to recite a chapter from the *mawlid* text. Unfortunately he was not able to recite the text without faltering and stammering. But because he was sitting prominently on the stage, people refrained from intervening or correcting his recitation. During the dinner following the conclusion of the event, however, I overheard a conversation between two Javanese Muslims, one of whom wanted to host a ritual recitation of the *mawlid* for his newborn baby and was keen on inviting several Bā ʿAlawīs to lead the ritual. They both agreed, however, not to invite the Bā ʿAlawī who had faltered during his turn to recite the *mawlid*. This case shows that while indeed Habib Luthfi has provided the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan with an arena that allows them to be recognized as ritual specialists, such a recognition hinges on their own ability to successfully perform that role. Despite their general respect towards the Bā ʿAlawīs, the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan continue to subject them to evaluation, and even punishment. A failure in playing the role of a competent ritual specialist usually means that the actor will no longer be invited to lead rituals, thereby disqualifying him from the prayer economy.

There is also a case whereby after rising to prominence through the RMKS*,* a Bā ʿAlawī has begun to think that he himself has become a leader of a *jamāʿa,* and has decided to part ways with Habib Luthfi. Such a practice is usually described by my interlocutors as *mufāraqa*, or separation.[179] It so happened that one Bā ʿAlawī — say, Hasan — who had been elevated to public prominence by Habib Luthfi began to criticize him for permitting the usage of a bass drum during the *mawlīd* alongside the traditional tambourine — the *rebana* — commonly used

[179] *Mufāraqa* is an Islamic legal term meaning separation. In common usage the term describes an act whereby someone praying collectively behind an *imam*, decides to break his collective prayer and pray by himself. Someone who performs *mufāraqa* during a collective prayer does not necessarily separate himself from the *jamāʿa* physically. He can do so purely by intention whilst still being physically present with the *jamāʿa*.

to accompany the singing of praise songs for the Prophet. The low booming sound of the bass drum is favored by the young attendees of the RMKS who move their bodies and dance while singing the praise. Hasan, however, objected to such usage, which in his words, "turns the *mawlid* into disco" and "violates the *sunna* of the *salaf* (predecessors)".[180] Thinking that his popularity among the RMKS attendees was synonymous with having his own *jamāʿa*, the following year, Hasan organized his own *mawlid* network, in which only *rebana* is allowed. At first, the events he organized were well-attended, albeit much smaller events than the RMKS. But when news began to circulate that he had separated himself from Habib Luthfi, many people in the regency loyal to the RMKS chose to disassociate themselves from Hasan.[181] In the following year, only one village in the regency was willing to host a *mawlid* event affiliated with Hasan, and consequently, he disbanded his *mawlid* network. Early *mufāraqa* with Habib Luthfi thus cut short Hasan's career as a ritual specialist, and in the end, he rejoined the *manṣab*'s *jamāʿa*.

In sum, the RMKS has not only facilitated Habib Luthfi's expansion into the regency, but has also led to the dismantling of the *manṣab*'s monopoly over Islamic ritual leadership in the regency. Today, the new Bā ʿAlawī ritual specialists are also referred to by the honorific *habīb* by the traditionalist Muslims of the regency as in the case of the aforementioned Salim. In response

[180] For the term *sunna salaf*, see: chapter 4.

[181] Habib Luthfi himself made a statement regarding this issue during one of his *mawlid* sermons, in which he contested the meaning of the term *salaf* and the proper way of emulating the *sunna salaf*:

> Today, the youth are partying in the discotheques, rock concerts and other musical events. Yet, with the bass drum and the disco beat, they are interested to attend the *mawlid*. So what should we do? Should we stay the way we were and follow the technicalities of the *salaf*? Or rather, should we emulate the *salaf* in their proselytizing spirit and adapt to new musical instruments to attract the youth? Should we stay within the *sunna* of our *salaf* and distance ourselves from the youth? Then what is the point of our gathering if not to connect the youth to our beloved Prophet? There are many ways of following the *salaf*. I warn you do not be haste in judging other people as not following the *salaf*, as perhaps you are the one who does not know the *salaf*. Let us get to know our *salaf*, then we will be able to emulate them. If someone says that Habib Luthfi does not follow the *salaf*, let the person come to me directly and I will teach him about the *salaf*!

to this development, in 2010 the *manṣab* and several other *kyais* who remained loyal to him began to organize their own *mawlid* network, that became known as the *Rangkaiaan Mawlid Masjid al-Rawdah* (The *mawlid* network of the al-Rawḍa Mosque, RMMR), as these events are held following the annual *mawlid* at the al-Rawḍa Mosque. Unlike the RMKS, the RMMR is held in a much more modest fashion. There are no parades, fireworks, or singing of patriotic songs that characterize the RMKS. These events simply consist of the recitation of the *mawlid* and one short sermon held at the mosques or *pesantren* headed by a *kyai* loyal to the *manṣab*.[182] The RMMR pales in comparison to the RMKS. Only thirty events are held in the Regency of Pekalongan annually as opposed to the one hundred fifty RMKS events held all over Java in 2013. Like Habib Luthfi, the *manṣab* began to enlist the support of his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs, most of whom come from his own extended families, to participate in the RMMR. Some Bā ʿAlawīs who participate in the RMKS also participate in the RMMR. Both Habib Luthfi and the *manṣab* do not object to the double participation of their fellow Bā ʿAlawīs.

The existence of two *mawlid* networks, however, posits difficulties to local *kyais* who have to choose between affiliating their local *mawlids* into the RMKS or the RMMR. Those affiliating with the RMKS know that the *manṣab* will not attend the gathering, and vice versa. Some of the more wealthy *kyais*, like *kyai* Masykuri of Warungasem chose to remain neutral by organizing two events during the annual *mawlid* of his *pesantren*: a morning *mawlid* as part of the RMMR and an evening one on the same day as part of the RMKS. The bifurcation becomes

[182] Another key difference between the RMKS and the RMMR is in regards to the *mawlid* text recited during the event. Following the tradition established by the saint Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās, the *mawlid* text recited in the al-Rawḍa mosque and its affiliated *mawlids* is that of the Yemeni ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Dībaʿī (d. 944/1537). In Java, recitation of the *mawlid* of al-Dībaʿī is usually referred to as *diba'an*. Similarly, following the annual *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*, each of the *mawlid* events affiliated with the RMKS is centered around the recitation of the *Ṣimt al-durar fī akhbār mawlid khayr al-bashar* by the Bā ʿAlawī scholar/poet ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1915).

blurred in cases where the host of the *mawlid* is a local government functionary, like the deputy mayor, or a local magnate, like the wealthy Batik industrialist, Haji Azis, who financially supports both *Kanzus Shalawat* and the *manṣabate*. Although these *mawlid* events are formally affiliated with the RMKS, the *manṣab* chooses to attend them albeit briefly.

At the same time, not all *mawlid* events that comprise both the RMKS and the RMMR are continued annually. Some individual *kyais* or merchants and some subdistricts or villages that previously hosted a *mawlid* may desist from hosting it the following year due to financial reasons. Indeed it may cost a village or a person up to Rp. 40,000,000 (approximately $4000) to prepare for the event, provide food for the attendees and monetary gifts for the Bā ʿAlawīs and *kyais*. Holders of public office like the mayor or the chairman of the city council also tend to stop hosting a *mawlid* upon leaving office. Nevertheless, other individuals, villages, or subdistricts usually fill in the vacancies left by those who withdraw from participating in the *mawlid* cycle. One visible result of the expansion of both the RMKS and the RMMR is the continuing *mawlid* festivity in Pekalongan that begins in the Islamic month of Rabīʿ I and continues for six months all the way until the last day of Shaʿbān, prior to the coming of the fasting month. Almost every evening there is a big *mawlid* held in one of the many neighborhoods or villages that make up the city and the regency of Pekalongan.

Articulatory Practices in the Country and the City

As previously mentioned, while people in Pekalongan tend to articulate the dividing line between Habib Luthfi and the *manṣab* in terms of legitimate leadership over the traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan, the contestation between the two factions is more complex, involving *articulatory practices* and conflicts with different state and non-state actors, as well as with Muslim and non-

Muslim others. To further comprehend the plural and precarious social terrain where the contestation takes places, the remainder of this chapter discusses six cases that illustrate the complexities involved in establishing alliances between different state and non-state social formations. Four cases are taken from the city of Pekalongan, while the other two are taken from the regency.

The City

Case I: Electoral Politics

While over the years Habib Luthfi has maintained a harmonious relationship with the police and the military, as well as both the central government in Jakarta and the provincial government in Semarang, his more recent relationship with the mayor of Pekalongan has been fraught with problems. During the course of my fieldwork, Habib Luthfi was not on speaking terms with the mayor, Dr. Basyir Ahmad (b. 1953), a non-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramī general practitioner who was elected twice on the Golkar ticket. When Basyir first ran for office in 2005, Habib Luthfi supported his nomination. The relationship broke down, however, when Basyir ran for a second term in 2010. The reason was that, Basyir's deputy, a Javanese disciple of Habib Luthfi by the name Abul Mafakhir, decided to run against Basyir. Habib Luthfi abandoned Basyir and decided to openly endorse Mafakhir. Here we see an interesting dynamic whereby *ṭarīqa* affiliation becomes more important than ethnic ties. While Basyir was a fellow Ḥaḍramī, he is affiliated with the anti-Bā ʿAlawī Ḥaḍramī reformist *jamʿiyya* (modern association), the al-Irshād (*al-Irsyad al-Islamiyah,* see: chapter 4). Although the intensity of the conflict between the Irshādis and the Bā ʿAlawīs has weakened over the course of the twentieth century, deep-seated mutual suspicions have, to a certain extent, remained. Mafakhir, on the other hand, was a *ṭarīqa* disciple,

someone who would certainly be open to the directives of his *murshid*. Basyir was displeased with Habib Luthfi's decision, and when he defeated Mafakhir in the 2010 mayoral election, Habib Luthfi lost an important ally in the city's government.

The fact that Habib Luthfi's endorsement and active support for Mafakhir failed to deliver success raises the question regarding the influence of religious leaders with extensive *jamāʿas* over electorate politics. Indonesian politicians have continued to befriend religious Muslim leaders in the hope of securing the support of their followers. Substantial donations and gifts were distributed by politicians to religious leaders to woo them to their camps. Nevertheless, it seems that their religious authority over their *jamāʿas* does not automatically translate into electoral votes. There seems to be a divergence between spiritual and political allegiance. As a result, money politics, in the form of direct distribution of money to voters on the morning of the election — an electoral strategy known in Indonesia as "Operasi Fajar" (Dawn Operation) — seems to be preferred by politicians as opposed to distributing money to religious leaders.[183]

The relationship between Habib Luthfi and the mayor reached an all time low in 2011 during the annual *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*. While Basyir was already displeased with Habib Luthfi's lack of support, as a mayor he was compelled to attend the event that brought together more than one hundred thousand Muslims to the city. Additionally, the presence of high-ranking government and military dignitaries during the event demanded his participation as the mayor of the hosting city. As usual, members of the Banser together with police and military

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[183] A reportage on the 2009 Indonesian general election by the *Tempo* magazine (06/38, April 2009) suggests that the influence of Muslim leaders over electoral politics has significantly waned. The report shows how in the areas around several well-known *pesantrens* of East Java, only voters from within the *pesantren* follow the political choice of the *kyais*, while people from the surrounding areas voted differently.

personnels are actively involved in organizing the annual *mawlid*, from managing vehicle parking, guarding Habib Luthfi, to distributing food. It so happened that when Basyir's car arrived at the scene, a member of the Banser told the car's chauffeur not to proceed as there was no parking space. Feeling entitled, the mayor's chauffeur did not heed the Banser's instruction. The Banser personnel then smacked the car, not knowing that it was the mayor's car and that the mayor was sitting inside the car. Basyir's adjutant came down from the car and punched the Banser and they began to exchange blows before being dispersed by crowd.

Habib Luthfi took offense at how one of his auxiliaris was treated, and took the case to the court. Subsequently, the judge sentenced the mayor's adjutant to two months imprisonment. Following the incident, Basyir stopped attending Habib Luthfi's annual *mawlid,* notwithstanding the presence of high-ranking officials from Jakarta. Even when the Indonesian President Soesilo Bambang Yudhoyono attended the *mawlid* in 2013, Basyir — and the *manṣab* who never made appearance during the *mawlid* — were strikingly absent from the podium, choosing to welcome and meet the president on his arrival at the train station. The violent incident, however, was seen by many in Pekalongan as a slap in the face to the mayor and the institution he embodied. "How can a figure like Habib Luthfi, with his Banser, be able to exert its force upon a formal government authority?," one man rhetorically asked me during a conversation. While both Habib Luthfi and the mayor were offended by the incident, this case further illustrates the complex and contingent relation between an influential religious authority who has his own paramilitary auxiliary — and is closely linked to the military and the police — and an elected personification of the state.

In contrast to Habib Luthfi, the *manṣab* is very close to Basyir, being a long-time neighbor in the Arab quarter. Basyir was the doctor of the *manṣab*'s family, providing medical care to both the first and the second *manṣab*. The relationship between the two has intensified following Basyir assumption of the mayoral office. The mayor's official policy of banning the sale of alcohol, as well as his ongoing plan to close down entertainment nightclubs within the city limit of Pekalongan won the support of the *manṣab*. As a *manṣab* who is looked up to as a religious leader not only by his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs but also by local *kyais*, Habib Bagir sees that central to his socio-religious role is the responsibility to safeguard public morality. In support of the *manṣab,* Basyir attends the annual commemoration of the patron saint of Pekalongan Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās, despite his own modern-reformist Islamic sensibility that objects to the practice of venerating saints. Unlike the case of Habib Luthfi, the relation between the mayor and the *manṣab* exemplifies a functioning *articulatory practice.*

Figure 7.8: The *manṣab* and the mayor of Pekalongan during the annual ḥawl of Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās (07/04/2012).

Case II: The Salafi Mosque of Pekalongan

Another point of contention between Habib Luthfi's and the mayor was the latter's implicit support for the growing Salafi movement in Pekalongan that had developed from within the al-Irshād. The growth of the Salafi movement within the al-Irshād can be traced back to the early 1980s, when several of the association's regional leaders were disappointed over the dwindling state of the organization that in former times used to act as one of the precursors of educational reform. Its sister organization, the Muhammadiyah (founded 1912), had rapidly expanded.[184] While al-Irshād is known for running kindergartens, schools, and hospitals throughout Indonesia, the organization has nevertheless been faltering behind other reform-oriented institutions. Al-Irshād schools are not even considered by many Ḥaḍramī Indonesians who used to constitute the bulk of their students. Equally important has been the decline in the Arabic proficiency and general Islamic knowledge among young Irshādīs.[185]

To address this issue, several al-Irshād leaders began to develop relationships with, and send Irshādī youth to the Saudi-sponsored Islamic sciences and Arabic language institute (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab, LIPIA). Such a relationship also helped al-Irshād to garner Saudi support for the establishment of the *Pesantren* al-Irshād in Tengaran, Central Java in 1988. Founded in 1980, LIPIA was established as part of the Saudi response to the international impact of the Iranian Revolution. Offering both intensive and non-intensive pre-university Arabic courses, LIPIA was able to recruit talented students from different reformist

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[184] To date al-Irshād only has 450 schools (from kindergarten to high school), 8 hospitals, and no university. Muhammadiyah on the other hand, has a total of 5.754 schools, 29 universities, and 72 hospitals.

[185] The dwindling of Arabic language proficiency has been a persistent source of anxiety among Ḥaḍramīs in Indonesia (Jacobsen 2009: 43). One should remember that the first modern Ḥaḍramī *jamʿiyya* in the Dutch East Indies, the Jamʿiyyah Khayr founded in 1901, was established by the Ḥaḍramī diasporic community 'to strengthen the mastery of the Arabic language and culture in the community' (de Jonge 2004: 377).

oriented schools as well as traditionalist *pesantrens*.[186] While admission standards are high, once admitted, students enjoy free tuition and stipends. Directly associated with the Imam Muhammad ibn Saʿud Islamic University in Riyadh, and under the direct supervision of the Saudi Embassy in Jakarta, the institute's objective was precisely to expand Saudi Arabia's sphere of influence and reshape young minds to become the receptacle of the Salafi theological doctrines.[187]

The expansion of Salafism within the Irshādī community happened quite dramatically. Many local branches of the organization came under the domination of Salafi thought. They began to question and criticize the al-Irshād leadership who in their view had softened up and were no longer involved in the original idea of purifying idolatrous and erroneous Islamic practices. Salafi teachers actively attempted to turn the aforementioned *Pesantren* al-Irshād into a center for the inculcation of Wahhabi doctrines (Hasan 2006: 74). These younger Irshādīs took a hard stance towards the Bā ʿAlawīs, accusing them of misguiding Indonesian Muslims with their heretical Sufi rituals and discourses. The growing Salafi camp within al-Irshād — which is also full of intrigues and factionalisms — rallied around the figures of Farouk Zein Badjabier and the wealthy Surabaya-based businessman Khalid Bawazier. Bawazier funded the expansion of the

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[186] The flow of Saudi theological influence to Indonesia, including the establishment of LIPIA, was facilitated by the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (Indonesian Council for Islamic Propagation, DDII), instituted by the former Indonesian prime minister Muhammad Natsir (d. 1993) and several other former leaders of the defunct Islamic political party Masyumi. Founded in 1967, the DDII became the Indonesian representative of the Saudi backed organization, World Muslim League (*Rabitat al-ʿAlam al-Islami*) (Hasan 2006: 39-40).

[187] Several young Irsyadis who were admitted to LIPIA in turn received scholarships to study in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan — including the Jaʿfar ʿUmar Thalib who later on founded the Laskar Jihad in 1999 (Hasan 2006). While Thalib himself was a LIPIA dropout, he nevertheless was able to continue his education in Pakistan. In 1987, as a student at the Mawdudi Islamic Institute in Pakistan, Thalib joined the *mujahidīn* in the Afghan War. In 1990, he went to North Yemen, to study under the influential Salafi ideologue, Muqbil b. Hādi al-Wādiʿī, and began sending Indonesian students to his school in Damaj. Upon their return to Indonesia, these graduates of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and North Yemen actively preached Salafism through different means, including study circles, campus organizations, and publications. For al-Wādiʿī and the Salafi movement in Yemen, see: Haykel 2002; Knysh 2007; Hegghammer & Lacroix 2007; Hamidi 2009; Bonnefoy 2009; Bonnefoy 2011. On the spread of Salafism in Indonesia, see: Hasan 2006; Hasan 2007; Abuza 2003; Machmudi 2008; Bruinessen 2015.

Salafi movement in different places, building mosques, schools, dormitories, as well as providing scholarships for students to attend Salafi educational centers abroad.[188]

One of these new Salafi mosques was built in the neighborhood of Kwijan, Pekalongan, within walking distance from the *Kanzus Shalawat.* The mosque was formally opened in July 2011 by Basyir and Shaykh ʿAlī Ḥasan al-Ḥalabī, a Salafi scholar from Syria, who was the student of the famed Albanian Salafi ideologue, Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (d. 1999). Ever since its opening, the mosque has caused the displeasure of its traditionalist Muslim neighbors. Almost every day, following the dawn and afternoon prayer, the mosque holds classes by Salafi preachers, most of which revolve around criticizing the Islamic practice of the traditionalist Muslims — like the *mawlid,* saintly commemoration, and visiting saintly tombs — which in their view are deemed as erroneous innovations (*bidʿa*) and idolatry (*shirk*). While these daily classes are only attended by about ten to twenty people, the mosque had installed a powerful speaker on the minaret. As a result, adversarial Salafi discourses resonate through the urban soundscape entering into peoples' homes and private spaces, including Habib Luthi's balcony where he likes to sit and drink his post-siesta coffee. This has caused a growing resentment among the traditionalist Muslims in Pekalongan, particularly those living in the vicinity of the mosque.

Attempting to address the situation, local NU activists close to Habib Luthfi began to look into the permit of the mosque. They found that the local RT (head of neighborhood/ community association) and *Lurah* (subdistrict head) had never issued a formal permit for the

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[188] During the al-Irshād congress in Pekalongan in 1996, the Salafi camp attempted to take over the organization's leadership from the then chairman Geys Amar (Hasan 2006: 75; Slama 2014: 122). An intra-Irshādī rift ensued, with both camps claiming to be legitimate. Both sides began to hold their own congresses and form their own administrations.

construction of the mosque. Those building the mosque had never asked for the official permit, nor did they request consent from the neighbors, as per city regulation concerning the construction of public edifices. These NU activists subsequently found out that the permit for the building of the mosque had come directly from the mayor without going through the standard procedure involving neighbors, the local RT and the *Lurah*. The NU activists as well as the traditionalist Muslims living in the mosque's vicinity have repeatedly filed complaints to the mayor to no avail. They have also brought their grievances to Habib Luthfi, who has not been able to do anything, for the final authority on such matter remains in the hands of the mayor. Here we see a clear example in which Habib Luthfi's ability to address the complaint of his *jamāʿa* is curtailed due to his strained relationship with an important personification of the state.

In contrast, the *manṣab*'s close relationship with the mayor has enabled him to exert his influence upon Basyir regarding the expansion of Salafism. Habib Bagir may be personally close to the mayor, but he strongly disagrees with his Salafi inclinations. Like Habib Luthfi, the *manṣab* has repeatedly criticized the Salafis, both in formal and informal settings. The *manṣab*'s cordial relations with mayor, together with his strong stance against the Salafis, made him into the right person to turn to in cases involving Salafi expansion. Local traditionalist *kyais*, even those who are close to Habib Luthfi, turn to the *manṣab* for such concerns. Most of them have not been close to the mayor due to their support for the NU mayoral candidate, Abul Mafakhir. While Habib Bagir himself has not been able to persuade the mayor to reconsider the permit for the Salafi mosque, he nevertheless has been able to apply some degrees of pressure on the mayor in another Salafi connected problem regarding the city council mosque.

The city council owns a big congregational mosque located in one of the city centers. For years, the mosque's leadership was entrusted to a traditionalist *kyai.* When Basyir became the mayor, however, he unilaterally replaced the imam with a Salafi scholar, despite the fact that the old imam was still under working contract for another three years. The mayor's action alarmed traditionalist *kyais* who feared a Salafi takeover of the mosque. While these *kyais* were close to Habib Luthfi, they nonetheless turned to the *manṣab* knowing the latter's cordiality with the mayor. Habib Bagir pleaded with the mayor on their behalf and weeks later, the Salafi imam was replaced and the old imam restored. This case therefore highlights the importance of articulatory practice between different state and non-state actors in effecting efficacious intervention within the plural and conflictual social terrain of Pekalongan. Unlike Habib Luthfi's inability to address the grievance of his *jamāʿa*, personal relation with the mayor enabled the *manṣab* to persuade him into revising his decision, despite the mayor's own Salafi leaning.

Case III: The Chinese Lion Dance

Habib Luthfi has been generally known for his close connections with the small but prosperous Chinese community of Pekalongan, a relationship that has been maintained for at least a decade. Over the years, he has continued to defend their political and cultural rights as Indonesian citizens, protect their business interests, while educating his *jamāʿa* on the danger of racial vilification. Habib Luthfi has also attempted to incorporate the Chinese community into his circle. Every year, Habib Luthfi delivers a speech at the local Chinese temple during the *Cap Go Meh* that marks the end of the Chinese new year celebration. He has also requested the community to perform the traditional lion dance (*barong sai*) during the parade that is helf one day before the annual *mawlid* of the *Kanzus Shalawat*. Public performance of the lion dance was

banned during the New Order period. The ban was only lifted during the presidency of Abdurahman Wahid (1999-2001), together with the state's decision to recognize Chinese culture and Confucianism as an inherent part of the national culture.

Habib Luthfi's decision to incorporate the lion dance into his annual *mawlid* celebration was welcomed by the Chinese community. In several of his sermons, Habib Luthfi explained to his *jamāʿa* that the rationale behind incorporating the lion dance into the *mawlid* celebration is to attract the Chinese community to the *mawlid* as well as to expose his *jamāʿas* to the nation's cultural varieties.[189] Indeed leading members of the Chinese community of Pekalongan — together with other non-Muslims — financially support and actively take part in the annual *mawlid* at *Kanzus Shalawat.* Many traditionalist Muslims, however, were alarmed by it, seeing it as a visible sign of the growing economic and political power of the Chinese community. The performance of the lion dance has also been used by people who refuse to attend the annual *mawlid,* including the *manṣab*, as the primary reason informing their decision. In their view, the performance of the lion dance is a *bidʿa* (erroneous innovation) that contradicts the Prophetic *sunna*.

Following the precedent of the annual *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat*, several other *mawlid* events affiliated with the RMKS began to host performances of the lion dance as part of the celebration, generating further controversy. In 2011, when several disciples of Habib Luthfi from the village of Kebasen, in the regency of Tegal (Central Java) planned to host the performance of the lion dance during their annual *mawlid*, the *manṣab*'s brother-in-law, who

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[189] In one informal conversation, Habib Luthfi told several local *kyais* that both his and Abdurahman Wahid's decisions to support the efflorescence of Chinese cultural and religious traditions are informed by a conscious strategy of impeding the rampant christianization of the Indonesian Chinese population that has been occurring since 1965, following the state's ban of Confucianism.

resides in Tegal, drew up a petition against it signed by local Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *kyais.* Addressed to the local regent, chief of police, and commander of the military district, the petition stated that the lion dance is a theologically-laden performance, explaining that for the Chinese, the dance is believed to be a ritual "to repel misfortunes" (*penolak bala*) and to "induce luck" (*pembawa keberuntungan*). The document also states that the lion dance is believed to be "the vehicle of the gods" (*kendaraan para dewa*) (*Pernyataan Keberatan* 2011: 3). The document petitions local state apparatus to forbid the planned performance. The regent, the police chief, and the military commander, however, were all close to Habib Luthfi. When they asked Habib Luthfi's advice regarding the situation, he stressed the importance of educating the public regarding the cultural heterogeneity of Indonesia. Consequently, the three personifications of the state went ahead and gave their permission and support for the performance of the lion dance. Unlike in Pekalongan, Habib Luthfi's connection to the three leading embodiments of the state in Tegal enabled him to persuade them into extending their support for his disciples and followers in Kebasen, despite the consternation of local Bā ʿAlawīs and *kyais.*

Case IV: Nightclubs

Another point of tension between Habib Luthfi, the mayor, and the *manṣab* concerns the growth of nightclubs — like discotheques and karaoke bars — owned by local Indonesian-Chinese businessmen. When Basyir became mayor in 2005, he issued a mayoral decree banning the sale of alcohol in Pekalongan, a policy that disadvantaged the nightclub owners. Habib Luthfi, on the other hand, chose to address the growth of nightclubs pragmatically. In his view, the nightclubs should be allowed to operate freely in Pekalongan to generate employment and further investment, and to bring revenues to the city. Faced with an unfriendly mayor, the nightclub

owners sought the protection of Habib Luthfi in the hope of benefiting from his intimate connection to the local police and military.

While the police and the military no longer have the same degree of power and political influence that they enjoyed during the New Order period, both institutions remain active in providing protection to various business ventures, including mining (Tsing 2005; Kirsch 2010) and the entertainment industry. Oftentimes, such collusion is brokered by influential middlemen like Habib Luthfi. Such a description may sound negative, and indeed it does to many people, but Habib Luthfi himself has been open about it and does not see it negatively. As he often made it clear to his *jamāʿa*, his decision to protect such businesses is simply based on the fact that they have generated employment opportunities for the Muslims. Clarifying his position in a meeting with local NU *kyais* and activists:

> I am not thinking about the bosses, I am thinking about Ahmad, Maimunah, and Sartono, whose livelihoods depend on those bosses. I maintain good relationships with the bosses because I am entrusting (*menitipkan*) our children (*anak-anak kita*) to them. If these entertainment sites (*tempat hiburan*) are closed, are you willing to provide jobs for the workers, most of whom are Muslims? One should think long and hard before making any hasty decisions, unlike the Muhammadiyah [modern reformist organization] people who declare that cigarette is unlawful (*ḥarām*) without thinking about the tens of thousands of Muslim tobacco farmers and factory workers whose livelihood depend on the sale of cigarettes. *Sharīʿa* should be a mercy rather than a disaster for the Muslims.

Here Habib Luthfi deploys the notion of common good, or *maṣlaḥa*, which has long been used by Muslim jurists to shift "the boundaries of any existing consensus, via modes of public reasoning concretely applied to any given situation" (Salvatore 2007: 156). Despite his efforts to persuade his fellow *kyais* to accept his reasoning, objections from the scholarly community remain in place.

Through the triangular relationship between Habib Luthfi, the police and the military, and the nightclub owners, the nightclubs have remained in operation and continued the sale of alcohol, notwithstanding the mayoral decree. One big hotel-nightclub complex owned by the local Chinese textile giant and a confidante of Habib Luthfi, Tiong Bing, hosts DJs and performers from Jakarta on a weekly basis. The nightclub continues to sell alcohol, despite the government's regulation. In return for Habib Luthfi's support, Tiong Bing financially supports the *Kanzus Shalawat* and regularly visits Habib Luthfi bearing gifts. Tiong Bing also built a big edifice in his entertainment complex to accommodate the guests of Habib Luthfi free of charge. When I first visited the place, there was a big sign stating "the resting area of the guests of *Kanzus Shalawat*" (*tempat peristirahatan tamu Kanzus Shalawat*), which sparked a controversy in Pekalongan due to its location within an entertainment complex. While the building remains in place, the sign, however, has been taken down.

In contrast to Habib Luthfi, the *manṣab* is known for his zero-tolerance of nightclubs and the sale of alcohol. Both the *manṣab* and the mayor are infuriated by the continuing existence of nightclubs in Pekalongan and their inability to intervene effectively. During a Friday prayer in Pekalongan's grand congregational mosque, the mosque's officials distributed a pamphlet to the congregants containing the *manṣab*'s condemnation of the nightclubs, explicitly naming Tiong Bing's entertainment complex. The *manṣab* called on the public to keep pressuring all government apparatuses (*semua instansi pemerintah*) to action. "Yes Pekalongan needs investments, but we do not want projects that can cripple public morality," states the *manṣab*. Habib Bagir's insistence on protecting public morality brought him closer to the controversial Jakarta-based vigilante organization, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI, see: chapter 5) that

opened its Pekalongan branch in 2011. The *manṣab* was asked to sit on its advisory board and accepted the invitation. The emergence of FPI in Pekalongan was welcomed by the mayor and the Salafis, while it angered Habib Luthfi and many of the NU affiliated Muslims. The organization's tendency to take the law into its own hands, together with its leader's persistent criticism of NU scholars for their lukewarm commitment to "enjoin the good and forbid the wrong" (*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*), have alienated the FPI from most traditionalist Muslims in Java. Habib Luthfi himself publicly warned the FPI during one of his *mawlid* sermons not to wreak havoc (*membuat keonaran*) in Pekalongan, threatening to deploy the Banser and "our brothers in uniform" against them. In response to the general public antipathy for the FPI, the *manṣab* withdrew himself from the organization less than two months after its inception. The fourth case thus illustrates how through his relationship with two instantiations of the state, namely the military and the police, Habib Luthfi was able to extend his support and protection over the Chinese business elites and consequently receive their support — whether employment or financial donations — for his *jamāʿa.* Such a functioning articulatory practice, in turn, limits the power of the mayor to enforce his own regulation, despite his alliance with other Muslim actors including the *manṣab,* the Salafis, and the FPI. Let us now turn to the regency.

The Regency

Case I: Electoral Politics

In 2001, an official from the provincial government of Central Java, Amat Antono, decided to run for the office of the regent (*bupati*) of Pekalongan. As his running mate, Antono chose an Islamic law lecturer from the State Islamic Institute of Pekalongan (STAIN), Siti Qomariah, who had just finished her masters degree in Islamic Studies at McGill University. Antono hoped that

his running mate, who is also the daughter of a senior traditionalist scholar, *kyai* Baghawi, would enable him to garner support from the traditionalist Muslims who form the majority of the population in the regency. For several years, *kyai* Baghawi had been close to Habib Luthfi, and thus when Antono and Qomariah approached Habib Luthfi for support, he gave it wholeheartedly. Supported by the traditionalist scholars and their followers, Antono and Qomariah were able to win the 2001 election. In the following election (2007), Qomariah decided to run against Antono. This time, Habib Luthfi supported Qomariah, as she was the reason for his 2001 support for Antono. Once a friend, Antono has since become an opponent of Habib Luthfi. Qomariah defeated Antono and became the regent of Pekalongan in 2007.

Qomariah's term as regent marked the peak of Habib Luthfi's expansion into the regency. Qomariah gave her full support to Habib Luthfi's projects. Her administration funded many *mawlid* events affiliated with the RMKS, she even annually hosted one herself at the government office. She gave the *Kanzus Shalawat* an expansive piece of land in the regency for a planned *pesantren.* Qomariah also instituted a monthly Islamic gathering for the women of the regency under the leadership of Habib Luthfi. Known as *Muslimat Tarekat* (*Muslim women of the ṭarīqa*), the monthly gathering drew the participation of around five thousand women from the villages all over the regency who came in trucks and buses, all paid for by the government. During Qomariah's term in office, Habib Luthfi embarked on a project of rebuilding the mausoleum of a local saint known to the locals as *Mbah Angsono*. The tomb is situated in the hamlet of Geritan, not far from the regency capital of Kajen and next to one of the headquarters of the army infantry

battalion (*yonif*) 407.[190] I will discuss the tomb's identity further in the next chapter. Suffice it to say at this point that the rebuilding of the tomb was made possible by the permission and financial support of Qomariah, and the physical assistance of the soldiers from the nearby barracks, who were instructed by their commanding officer to help build the new mausoleum. Qomariah's term as regent marked the furthest point reached by Habib Luthfi and his *jamāʿa* in their attempt to achieve dominance in the regency of Pekalongan. Similar traditionalist backgrounds, religious grammar, and political visions allowed regular dispersion of shared meaning across the two social formations personified by Habib Luthfi and Qomariah. Such a continuous articulatory practice is reinforced by similar practices connecting Habib Luthfi, the police, and the military, thereby producing a socially and politically efficacious bloc between 2007 and 2011, whose traces remain visible to the present day.

In 2011, the former regent Antono decided to run for office once again. Knowing that Qomariah's main support came from the traditionalist Muslims, he decided to form an alliance with Haji Bisri, the chairman of the local branch of PKB, Qomariah's own party. Haji Bisri had wanted to run as Qomariah's running mate, but was rejected. As a result he and the party turned their support to Antono.[191] Antono succeeded in defeating Qomariah and became, once again, the regent of Pekalongan. His return to power was a major blow to Habib Luthfi. Upon taking office, Antono removed the supporters of Qomariah and those who are close to Habib Luthfi from

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[190] Since becoming close to Habib Luthfi, the infantry battalion 407 has continued to host two annual *mawlids* as part of the RMKS. One is held at the Geritan/Wonopringgo headquarter and another one held at the central command in Slawi, Tegal. When I attended the *mawlid* in Geritan/Wonopringgo, the commanding officer told me that they prepared 2,500 trays of food (one tray is usually eaten by four to five people) and slaughtered more than thirty goats, some of which were given by Habib Luthfi. There were around fifteen thousand people in attendance.

[191] During my conversation with Qomariah, she told me that she was betrayed by her own political party and by several major traditionalist *kyais* who had pledged to support her. She described how Antono was able to procure large campaign funds, which he then used to buy the support of the traditionalist *kyais*.

influential positions. Financial support for gatherings affiliated with Habib Luthfi was cut. At several events, Antono publicly stated that organizing a *mawlid* is a waste of money and energy. In a phrase that has now become notoriously remembered by Habib Luthfi's supporters in the regency, Antono claimed that the only achievement of his predecessor as a regent was the construction of a *rumah hantu* (ghost house), referring to the saintly mausoleum in Geritan built by Habib Luthfi with Qomariah's support.

Antono's return to power did not, however, mark the end of Habib Luthfi's influence in the regency. After all, the role of the regency government had been limited to facilitating and providing financial support if needed. Thus, even without the regent's support, the RMKS still enjoys the assistance of other instantiations of the state, like the military and the police. *Muslimat Tarekat* continues to expand, although the attendees have to pay for their own transportation to the event. Nevertheless, the fractured relationship with the regent has had its impacts. Pak Nur Hamim, the caretaker of the mausoleum in Geritan complains that since Antono took office, no government official has been willing to sit in the mausoleum's board of trustees. Whenever Pak Nur Hamim organizes an event at the mausoleum, no government official is willing to participate. "They are scared of being identified as the supporters of Habib Luthfi," he explained to me. Since the government has withdrawn all financial support, Pak Nur Hamim has had to look for donations from other sources, like local businesses and individuals. He told me that such a shift has impacted the quantity of meat he is able to offer to those attending events at the mausoleum. In his words, "In the days of regent Qomariah, a tray of rice included six to seven big pieces of goat meat, now we are down to four smaller pieces per tray, well, praise be to Allāh (*alḥamdulillāh*), we are still able to offer food to the *jamāʿa*".

Case II: The Bridge of Wonobodro

Around thirty kilometers south of the city of Pekalongan, in the village of Wonobodro, stands an old saint's shrine believed to be the tomb of a mysterious saint known as Shaykh Mawlānā Maghribī, meaning someone who comes either from the West, or from the Maghreb.[192] The shrine has been a popular local and regional pilgrimage destination. Every year the shrine holds a public commemoration (*ḥawl*) attended by around five to six thousand people. The commemoration, however, is not organized by the village, but by the hereditary *kuncen* (caretaker of shrine) and the family of the eminent *kyai* Tahir of Buaran, who as I have previously mentioned has been an opponent of Habib Luthfi. Today, the son of *kyai* Tahir, Gus Anis, organizes the annual commemoration, with the *manṣab* leading the ritual. The organizers of the commemoration do not invite Habib Luthfi, although the village head and the villagers have continued to request the presence of Habib Luthfi. Thus, every year, Habib Luthfi visits the shrine with his *jamāʿa* on the eve of the commemoration, while excusing himself from attending the actual commemoration.

[192] The grave of Shaykh Mawlānā Maghribī is claimed by a half-dozen villages in Java. The anthropologist John Pemberton notes how within a fifty kilometer radius alone, there are at least four places claimed to be the tomb of Mawlānā Maghribī, each site bearing a particular history tied to its locality (Pemberton 1995: 286-7).

Figure 7.9: The tomb of Shaykh Mawlānā Maghribī, Wonobodro

One evening, I was sitting with Habib Luthfi in the library, when the *kades* (*kepala desa,* village head) of Wonobodro arrived accompanied by two other persons. After kissing Habib Luthfi's hand, the *kades* sat and informed him that the only bridge capable of supporting cars that connect the village to the outside world had collapsed. The concern of the *kades* was compounded because the annual commemoration of Shaykh Mawlānā Maghribī was less than a month away. For that reason, the *kades* had to borrow an emergency mobile bridge from the headquarters of the Kodam (*Komando Daerah Militer,* Military Area Commands) of Central Java in Semarang. The Kodam, however, charged Rp. 90,000,000 (Approximately $9000) for the

emergency bridge and the *Kades* was unable to raise enough funds to cover the expense. Aware of Habib Luthfi's cordiality with the military, the *Kades* requested him to intercede on behalf of the village to the Pangdam (*Panglima Kodam,* commander of the Kodam).

Habib Luthfi, however, declined the request, explaining to the *kades* that since the end of the New Order, the TNI (Indonesian Armed Force) has been in dire financial straits. The TNI is not as well funded as it was and for that reason the rental fee has to be paid, he told the *kades*. Habib Luthi expressed to the *kades* his disappointment that the cost is burdened on the village rather than of the regency government. Note how, on the one hand, Habib Luthfi was careful of not overextending his reliance on the military as it could destabilize the alliance he has been building with them. On the other hand, his strained relationship with the regent Antono did not permit him to intercede on behalf of the village. Thus he could only explicitly express his opinion that the expense should be covered by the regency.

After lighting his cigarette Habib Luthfi thought for a while, and came up with a solution. He told the *kades* to use the money accrued from the pilgrimage donations to pay the Kodam. The *kades*, however, informed him that the income of the shrine is controlled by the *kuncen* and not the village head, and that the money had been spent on the shrine's renovation. Habib Luthfi then criticized the *kades* for allowing the money to be used on a dispensable matter, while ignoring the more urgent need. He told the *kades* that as the political leader of the village, he has more authority than the *kuncen* over how the income from the shrine ought to be spent. "You are the representative of the government (*wakil pemerintah*)," he told the *kades*.

Habib Luthfi then asked one of his attendants to get a pen and a piece of paper and give them to the *kades.* "Write," he instructed the *kades*, and Habib Luthfi began dictating a letter of

donation request. Once the dictation concluded, he told the *kades* to type it as a formal document with the seal of the village head and circulate copies of the letter to wealthy businessmen, government officials, and others. He instructed the *kades* to start by sending the letter to Gus Anis and the *manṣab*. "If they claim to be the custodians of the shrine, then they should pay attention to this problem and donate," Habib Luthfi exclaimed. He then left the library and went to his bedroom. Minutes later, he came carrying a thick envelope and gave it to the *kades*. "There, that is my share," he said. He then said that if the *kades* wants, he could sign the letter as a witness, to lend further credibility to the request letter. "My signature as a witness will also empower you to act on behalf of the village and you should never be subservient to the *kuncen*," he told the *kades,* meaning, having Habib Luthfi's signature on the letter will allow prospective donors from outside the village to take the *kades* seriously. Having Habib Luthfi's signature on the letter also strengthens the *kades*' standing among the villagers. After all, the *kuncen*'s authority over the shrine is partly built on his relationship with an outside Islamic authority, whether the family of the eminent *kyai* Tahir of Buaran or the *manṣab*.

This case shows how the contestation between Habib Luthfi, the *manṣab*, the regent, and the family of *kyai* Tahir takes place even in micro level, where it is mapped onto village politics contestations like that between the *kades* and the *kuncen*. The *kuncen* is close to Gus Anis and the *manṣab.* Together, they organize the annual commemoration. The *kades*, on the other hand, has been left powerless in the management of the pilgrimage economy. He also feels that his aspirations have not been heard by the regent. This, together with the village's debt to the military, drove him to seek intercession from Habib Luthfi. Habib Luthfi, on the other hand, refused to intercede with the military, nor was he in the position to persuade the regent because

of their political animosities. But what is fascinating is precisely the way in which Habib Luthfi used the opportunity to proclaim himself as a supporter and protector of the *kades* — who is the local personification of the state — not only in the attempt to garner donations, but also in the village politics *vis-à-vis* the *kuncen*. Such an opportunity allowed Habib Luthfi to persuade the friendly *kades* that as the hand of the state, he ought to control the shrine. At the same time, by adding his signature to the formal letter of the village head that was to be sent to Gus Anis and the *manṣab*, Habib Luthfi was able to borrow the authority of the state (as personified by the *kades* and instantiated in the formal letter) to discursively present himself as an interested custodian of not only the shrine, but also the village. Habib Luthfi does not have the authority to authorize an official in the name of the state, but he was able to be endorsed by the state official by assisting and supporting the official's fundraising attempt. In the letter, the signatures of the state and the Sufi shaykh are mutually reinforcing. Habib Luthfi also effectively directed the *kades* to question and test the dedication of the *kuncen,* Gus Anis, and the *manṣab*, as well as the other instantiations of the state, namely, the regent. This is an example of a concrete articulatory practice between a *murshid* of a *ṭarīqa* and an instantiation of the state that occurs in a micro level, but which nevertheless allows the *murshid* to borrow the authority of the state to lay claim on the custodianship of a shrine and challenge other claimants to the position.

As the conversation between Habib Luthfi and the *kades* was concluding, Habib Luthfi suddenly turned to me and said,

> since yesterday my heart was heavily drawn towards Wonobodro. I felt as if I had been summoned to visit Mawlāna Maghribī. I did not know why, but now I know why I had that sudden longing. This problem is what that feeling was about.

I smiled to Habib Luthfi and continued taking notes. What is interesting is the way in which Habib Luthfi indirectly represented himself as someone who had been given a special mandate from both an *elsewhere* (Mittermaier 2011) and an *elsewhen* (Taneja 2012; Taneja 2013) — perhaps by the deceased saint himself — to solve the problem faced by the village of Wonobodro. And he did that not by talking to the *kades* directly, but by talking to me while keeping the *kades,* who was still sitting in his position, as an overhearer. This can be understood as a claim of spiritual acquaintance (*taʿarruf rūḥī*) with the deceased saint, which may entail concrete consequences regarding legitimate custodianship of the shrine. Such a claim need to be expressed indirectly because a direct claim to such a spiritual station can seriously undermine it. This is summed up in a popular adage among Sufi oriented Muslims in Java, "no saint claim oneself as a saint" (*tidak ada wali yang mengaku wali*). That is, if one's claim to sainthood is to be taken seriously, one should not openly or directly claim it. Rather, one ought to do so through indirect means as exemplified in Habib Luthfi's statement. Such an indirect claim to sainthood can bolster Habib Luthfi's claim for the custodianship of the shrine, *vis-à-vis* the villagers. But for such an indirect spiritual claim to be realized, it has to be articulated in and become entangled with the grammar of village politics.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how various alliances with the state have enabled Habib Luthfi to further expand his *jamāʿa,* penetrate new territories, and incorporate actors outside of his *ṭarīqa* circle. Alliance between Habib Luthfi and the state does not only further the reach of his *jamāʿa*, but also enables the state to be instantiated by other social formations that, strictly speaking, are not its constitutive elements, like a *ṭarīqa*. Such alliances take shape through conscious

articulatory practice, whereby each of the articulated formations actively creates nodal points where their contrastive grammars of the political intersect and partially fix meaning. Such a practice allows the state to replicate its presence in diverse social settings, like a *mawlid* and other Islamic rituals, thereby helping to further realize its desire to be an all encompassing socio-political formation. In the process, however, the state is colored through the dispersion of other grammars from other formations, generating excess of meaning even within its body politic, filling the secular and "homogeneous, empty time" with other supposedly banished actors, spirits, social imaginaries, and temporalities. Such articulatory practices reproduce while simultaneously recreating the secular state, allowing it to be experienced differently by diverse actors.

I have also shown how the state is instantiated in diverse actors and institutions that, despite various internal regimenting operations, are often locked in contradictions and contestations. Different state actors create alliances with various non-state actors, fixating different meanings and pursuing diverse and often conflicting projects, some of which become efficacious in conjectural and relational contexts, while others simply fail to do so. The increasingly plural and conflictual terrain of social life in decentralized Indonesia means that power and efficacy are becoming increasingly realizable momentarily and relationally. The more state and non-state actors are brought together in a functional constellation, the more powerful and efficacious it becomes. When a temporary efficacious bloc takes shape it may produce results that endure long after the bloc itself disintegrates, like Habib Luthfi's achievements in the regency of Pekalongan. Nevertheless, the proliferation of state and non-state actors, their

attempts to realize contrastive projects, and their deployment of contending grammars of the political means that complete dominance ultimately remains an unachievable aspiration.

While Habib Luthfi has successfully assembled an expansive *jamāʿa* that revolves around his authority, one problem that has continued to haunt him from the beginning of his career remains, namely, the divergence between his *nasab* and *silsilā*, his lineage and spiritual genealogy. In light of Habib Luthfi's claim to a Bā ʿAlawī spiritual authority, the two need to be conjoined. This calls for a genealogical return, which in the case of Habib Luthfi, also involves genealogical expansion, particularly to a historically and symbolically potent Islamic socio-political formation in Java with which this dissertation began. Yes, I am referring to the *kraton*.

Chapter VIII

Composing Genealogy

> The fugue, as it was formalized in Bach's time, is the true-to-life representation of the working of some specific myths, of the kind where we have two characters or two groups of characters. The story unrolled by the myth is that of one group trying to flee and escape from the other group of characters; so you have a chase of one group by the other, sometimes group A rejoining group B, sometimes group B escaping — all as in a fugue. The antithesis or antiphony continues through the story until both groups are almost confused and confounded — an equivalent of the *stretta* of the fugue; then a final solution or climax of this conflict is offered by a conjugation of the two principles which have been opposed all along during the myth.
>
> \- Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Myth and Meaning*

> Music is not about statements or about being. It's about becoming. It's not the statement of a phrase that is really important, but how you get there and how you make the transition to the next phase.
>
> \- Edward Said, *Parallels and Paradoxes*

One evening, whilst sitting in the balcony of his house with several guests and disciples, Habib Luthfi recounted the story of his birth. He began by saying that he heard the story from the first *manṣab* of Pekalongan, ʿAlī b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṭṭās (d. 1992):

> Habib ʿAlī loved me very much. I myself never knew how he came to be fond of me. Even his children realized their father's affection towards me. Only towards the end of his life, did Habib ʿAlī tell me the reason. Habib ʿAlī told me that one day, he was visited by three eminent guests (*tamu agung*): the spiritual axis of Java (*quṭb jāwa*) Habib Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf of Gresik, accompanied by two other great saints (*wali agung*) from Surabaya: Habib ʿUmar b. ʿAqīl and Habib ʿUmar b. Yaḥya. All three came from East Java. They told Habib ʿAlī that they had come to Pekalongan to witness the birth of their son, and asked him to take them to my parents' house. They arrived just in time for my birth. So I was born with three great saints sitting and waiting in the living room. After the midwife and my grandmother bathed me, my father brought me to the saints. They embraced me and prayed for me. My father asked Habib Abū Bakr to name me. He told my father, "name him Muhammad and add 'Luthfi' to repel the evil eye (*li dafʿ al-ʿayn*)". As they were leaving

> Pekalongan, the three saints said to Habib ʿAlī, "since you are are living in Pekalongan, we ask you to look after Muhammad Luthfi." Habib ʿAlī agreed to do so and that was why he loved me so much.

The account left those who were listening speechless. Some responded by saying *subḥanallāh*, a phrase attributing total perfection to God. At the time, I myself did not know what to make of it. For days I kept listening to the recording to make sure that I understood what Habib Luthfi was trying to say. To me at least, the story sounded familiar, and I asked myself whether it was my own exposure that shaped my recognition of the story as an iteration of the biblical nativity of Jesus.

Habib Luthfi's nativity story began to make sense after I heard two other of his accounts, all of which revolve around his relationship with *manṣab* ʿAlī. Each of these stories was recounted on different occasions, and apart from myself and two or three of Habib Luthfi's close disciples, the audience of these stories was different. The place where these stories were related, however, was always the same, that is, Habib Luthfi's balcony where he prefers to spend his evenings, smoking his clove cigarettes, receiving guests, or just simply gazing at the darkening sky.

The second account concerns an event that took place a few years before the death of *manṣab* ʿAlī, and it was set at the mausoleum of the *manṣab*'s father, the saint Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās, discussed in chapter 4:

> Once, we were at the funeral of Habib ʿAlī's nephew and son-in-law, Muḥammad. He was buried outside the mausoleum. It was a well-attended funeral. There were many *shibān* (Bā ʿAlawī elders) coming from different places. Habib ʿAlī suddenly asked me to come with him and enter the mausoleum. There were many *shibān* sitting inside the mausoleum waiting for the funeral to conclude, among them, *ʿamm* (uncle) Muḥammad Ṭawīlan, *ʿamm* ʿAbdallāh al-Kāff, and *ʿamm* Abū Bakr al-ʿAṭṭās. Habib ʿAlī asked me to stand in front of his father's tomb. He held my right hand and placed it on the tombstone. Those sitting in the

> room were surprised by the gesture. Habib ʿAlī then asked me to repeat after him: "*yā ḥabīb Aḥmad, ana waladkum* (O Habib Aḥmad, I am your son)." I repeated what he said. Then Habib ʿAlī said: "*ya wālid, akhī ʿAlī yabgha duʿa minkum* (O father, my brother ʿAlī requests your supplication)," and told me to repeat after him. Of course I could not repeat that. How could I refer to Habib ʿAlī, my teacher and someone who was much older than me, as "my brother"? But Habib ʿAlī forced me to say it. And so I said those words, "O father, my brother ʿAlī requests your supplication." Habib ʿAlī's hand was clutching my right hand, placing it on the tombstone, as I said those words.

The third account takes place during the last *ḥawl* (annual commemoration) of Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās attended by *manṣab* ʿAlī. So it must have been 1991. The setting was the *al-Rawḍa* mosque, the seat of the *manṣabate*. Every year, on the eve of the *ḥawl,* the *manṣab* hosts a *zafīn* session to entertain guests.[193] The story took place in the midst of the *zafīn*:

> It was Habib ʿAlī 's last *ḥawl*, and he was already ill. As usual, he held *zafīn* on the eve of the *ḥawl*. Habib ʿAlī was sitting with other *shibān* watching the youngsters dance. He then called Jamhari [his helper] and told him to look for me. I was behind in the kitchen helping out (*rewang*). When I heard that Habib ʿAlī was looking for me, I went to him straight away. Jamhari was the witness, and you can all ask him. Habib ʿAlī asked me "Luthfi, come let us dance". Of course I was surprised and happy at the same time. He grasped my hand… it was a strong grasp… and took me to dance. We danced for a while and people were cheering. Habib ʿAlī looked really happy. Then his grandson Bagir [the current *manṣab*] appeared … he was quite young at the time … and asked his grandfather to stop. He was worried for his grandfather's health. Habib ʿAlī did not heed him. He kept on dancing with me until the song finished.

Habib Luthfi is certainly interested in establishing the historicity of the three accounts, hence his emphasis on the presence of eyewitnesses, some of whom, like Jamhari and Habib Bagir are still alive. Nevertheless, what is interesting is not the question of facticity, but how taken together, the three accounts articulate Bā ʿAlawī conceptions of authority, succession, and legitimacy.

[193] *Zafīn* or *zafn* means to dance or to move one's legs forward and backward in dancing. *Zafīn* (known by various names in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago such as *japin/jipin/jepin/dana*) has been traditionally performed across the Malay world, often incorporating the singing of *pantun* (Malay verse form), to celebrate events associated with weddings, circumcision, and the Prophet's birthday. It took root among the Malay-Islamic communities and gradually spread over insular Southeast Asia. In the Bā ʿAlawī circles, the verses sung during a *zafīn* session are limited to poems in praise of the Prophet and his Bā ʿAlawī descendants. See: Nor 2011; Berg 2011. For an ethnographic description of Bā ʿAlawī *zafīn*, see: Alatas 2014.

Each of the stories centers on the intimate relationship between Habib Luthfi and the acknowledged spiritual leader of the Bā ʿAlawīs in Pekalongan, *manṣab* ʿAlī, who achieved such a position through vertical or lineal succession from his father, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās (see: chapter 4). Unlike that of the *manṣab,* Habib Luthfi's religious authority was built through his adoption of a non-Bā ʿAlawī *silsilā,* which in turn delegitimized his standing in Bā ʿAlawī circles. If the *manṣab* represents the convergence of the *nasab* and the *silsilā*, Habib Luthfi represents its divergence. What the three accounts articulate, however, is precisely the re-convergence of Habib Luhfi's *nasab* and *silsilā*. The first account foregrounds Habib Luthfi's spiritual connection to three Bā ʿAlawī saints of Java, who referred to him as their son. The other two accounts relate to the promotion of Habib Luthfi's status as a younger brother of *manṣab* ʿAlī and thus a spiritual son of the patron saint of Pekalongan. The second and third accounts take place in two spatial locations that have constituted the *manṣab*'s authority. Finally, the third account prefigures the competition between Habib Luthfi and the current *manṣab,* Habib Bagir, over the leadership of the Bā ʿAlawīs and traditionalist Muslims of Pekalongan.

These accounts show how narratives complicate the more schematic image of authority as articulated in a genealogy. If genealogy conceives succession of religious authority in procreative terms, these narratives bring out the complexity of succession by positing it as social action (Valeri 1990:190). On the one hand, the stories accentuate the possibility of *lateral succession* (Goody 1970) of spiritual leadership, aside from the vertical/lineal succession adopted by the *manṣabate* (which of course also lies at the heart of the *sunni-shiʿī* divide). On the other hand, for the genealogically-minded Bā ʿAlawīs, lineal succession remains one of the most

crucial legitimizing mechanisms of religious leadership.[194] Consequently, to be taken as legitimate, a lateral claimant to a religious leadership needs to articulate his claim in kinship terms, *vis-à-vis* the previous holder of the position.[195] To paraphrase Marshall Sahlins (2004: 291), the contingency of succession unfolds in the terms of the cultural field of genealogy, from which actors drew their reasons and actions found their meanings.

In the case of Habib Luthfi, whose *nasab* and *silsilā* had diverged, lateral succession to a Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leadership involves a conscious *genealogical return* (Ho 2006). In his work, Ho describes two kinds of gender-differentiated genealogical return practiced by the Bā ʿAlawīs:

> While daughters were required to return to origins in a genealogical sense, in marriage, sons were encouraged to return in a geographical sense, as part of the journey of education and inculcation of the moral virtues. While genealogical returns for daughters were couched in the legal language of *kafāʾa* [rules of marriageability], the geographical returns of sons partook of the language of pilgrimage (2006: 223)

In Habib Luthfi's case, however, genealogical return is more complicated as it involves (1) a claim to a Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leadership, and (2) an attempt to re-converge the bifurcation of the *nasab* and the *silsilā*. To be recognized as a Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leader and to attract Bā ʿAlawīs into his *jamāʿa* and initiate them as disciples, Habib Luthfi had to re-situate himself — both discursively and practically — as someone who can connect his *jamāʿa* to the Prophetic *sunna* through a Bā ʿAlawī *silsilā*, and not just through the Naqshabandī or Shādhilī *silsilās*.

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[194] This is summed up by a broken Arabic expression commonly used by Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs in dismissing the competency of a Bā ʿAlawī scholar or preacher who does not come from an established saintly or scholarly lineage: *ʿarafnā man abūh!* (we knew who his father was), meaning that the father was not a scholar, a saint, or a *manṣab*.

[195] This is clearly captured in the poetic verses of the Bā ʿAlawī saint and poet ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī (d. 1333/1915):

> A path (*ṭarīqa*) of guidance, filled with secrets
> obtained by the nobles (*amjād*) who succeeded the noblest [The Prophet]
> A father received it from his father, and so on (*wa hākadhā*)
> How honorable are those fathers and sons (Alaydrus 2000: 183)

As I will argue in this chapter, in the case of Habib Luthfi, genealogical return involves what I call *genealogical composition.* Genealogical composition is a retrospective project that posits the past as a process and history as a becoming, akin to a musical composition wherein "time is transformed into all the possibilities of organized musical sound and a beautiful plasticity" (Barenboim & Said 2002: 17) with theme and variations, wherein each variation has a flavor of its own, but is able to be superimposed on an earlier variation (Lévi-Strauss 1979: 49), thereby offering precedent for present innovations while rendering them as part of a continuous totality. I use the term composition, not only because Habib Luthfi is literally an active music composer — whose compositions blend the synthetic acoustic and tonality of new-age composers like Yanni and Kitaro, with Javanese, Sundanese, and Arabic rhythms —, but also because the term resonates with an older Javanese notion of authorship that posits a writer as a composer (*panganggit, pangiket*): someone who productively *interlaces* (*nganggit*) and *binds together* (*ngiket*) old and new co[n]texts, thereby blurring the distinction between the act of writing "as physical 'replication' of prior inscription," and "as 'original' composition" (Florida 1993: 24). In composing genealogy, Habib Luthfi therefore fits into a longer tradition of historical writing in Java.

Genealogical composition provides genealogies to new innovations, thereby positing them as something inherited through lineal transmission, which in turn, allows a lateral claimant to a leadership position to present oneself as a lineal successor to that position. At the same time, genealogical compositions allow the interweaving of histories through the conjugation of different genealogies that have been posited as unconnected or unrelated, thereby facilitating genealogical and historiographical expansion. In the absence of documentary evidence, however,

the veracity of most genealogical compositions is based on (1) the claim and authority of the composer, combined with (2) an orchestrated involvement of other actors, particularly those with leverage over different regimes of knowledge production, and (3) the concrete social efficacy of such compositions. As such, genealogical composition is sustained by a web of social ties which in turn subject it to contestation and risk of disentanglement. The veracity of Habib Luthfi's genealogical composition may be accepted wholeheartedly by his *ṭarīqa* disciples and *jamāʿas,* but it may also be rejected by other actors. The success and failure of a genealogical composition thus lies in the concrete and contentious social relations that sustain such a project.

In this final chapter I look at cases of discursive/textual, spatial, and ritual genealogical compositions that have allowed Habib Luthfi to present himself as a lineal successor of an old but forgotten Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leadership in Java akin to a *manṣabate* — that of his own Bin Yaḥyā family — which at the same time is presented as intimately connected to the Javanese royal dynasty of Yogyakarta. As such, genealogical composition does not only facilitate a Bā ʿAlawī genealogical return, but also a genealogical expansion into the *kraton*. For Habib Luthfi, the time has come for Sufism and *ṭarīqa* to return to its historical center, i.e., the *kraton*.

Discursive/Textual Composition of Genealogy

For the last two decades, Habib Luthfi has been pursuing discursive and textual genealogical compositions aimed to recover what he sees as the forgotten and unrecorded history of the bin Yaḥyā family in Indonesia, particularly that of his own lineage. While the authenticity of his lineage is formally attested by the Bā ʿAlawī association, the Rabithah Alawiyyah, the *biographies* of his direct ancestors are not recorded in any of the major Bā ʿAlawī genealogical texts. Bā ʿAlawī genealogical writing as Engseng Ho (2006) has demonstrated, is informed by

several important logics, one of which pertains to the relationship between genealogy and biography. That is, while the names of all recorded Bā ʿAlawīs are inscribed on the pages of the genealogical text, only the *biographies* of those who in their lifetimes have achieved some sort of fame — whether as saints, scholars, sultans, or statesmen — are written in the genealogical tomes. Otherwise the tomes only mention names, lineal descent, and at best, year and place of death. A capsule biography of the patron saint of Pekalongan, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās, for instance, is appended to his name in the genealogical tomes, thereby becoming another source of genealogical authority for the *manṣab*. In the case of Habib Luthfi's lineage, however, there are no biographical addenda accompanying the names of his ancestors aside for the eponym of the bin Yaḥyā family and his sons. This, however, does not necessarily mean that Habib Luthfi's direct ancestors were people whose biographies are not worth mentioning as the genealogists may have specific and perhaps constrictive templates in mind when they choose to include or exclude a biographical addendum to a name. The absence of biographical addendum may also be due to the genealogists' unawareness of a person's fame and biography, or the lack of textual record. Nevertheless, the biographical absence of Habib Luthfi's ancestors in major Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tomes imposes a problem for his project of recovering his family history. Among the genealogically-minded Bā ʿAlawīs, it has been used to discredit his claim to Bā ʿAlawī spiritual leadership.
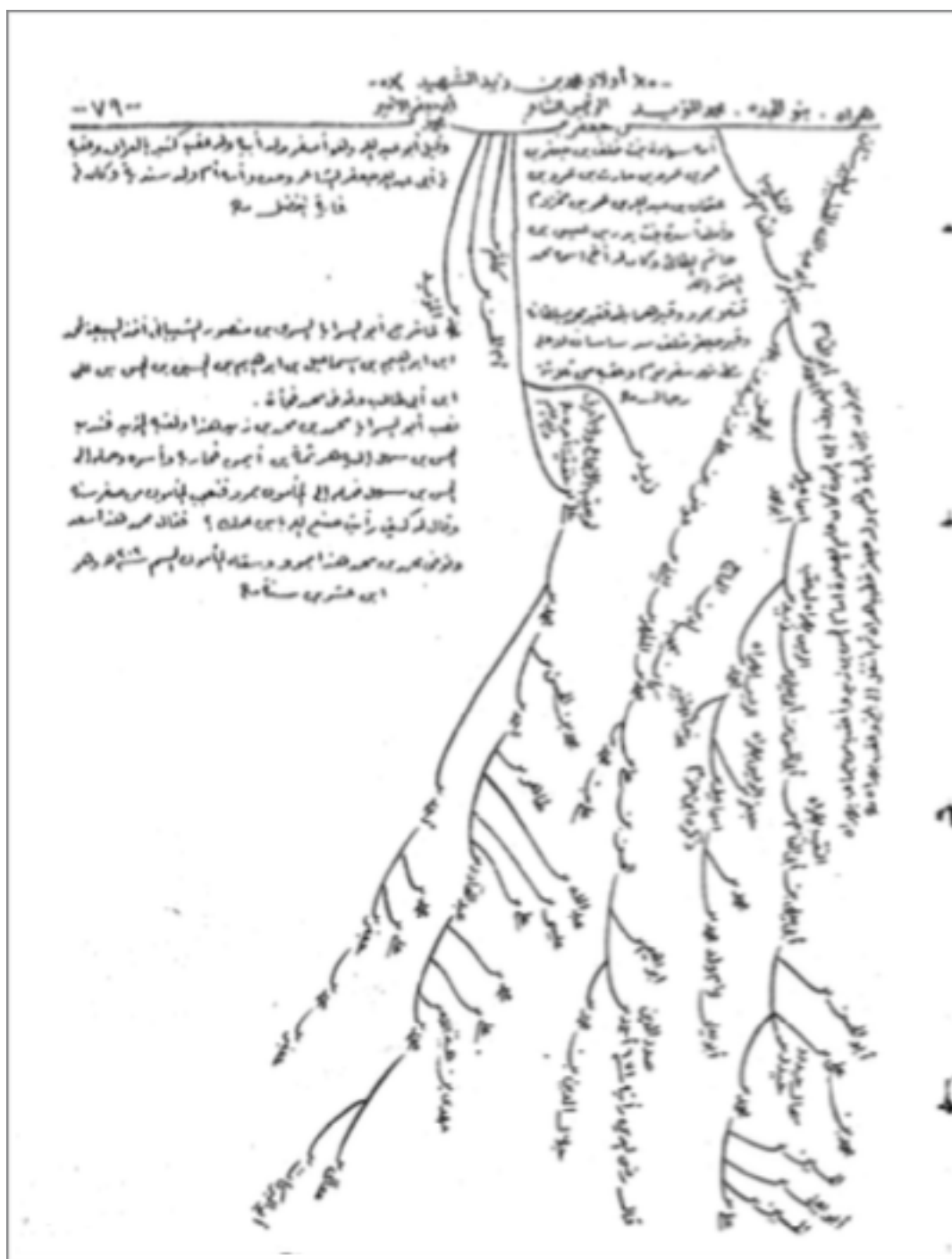
Figure 8.1: A page from the Bā ʿAlawī genealogy tome of Rabithah Alawiyyah (*Buku Induk Silsilah*). The block inscriptions are the biographical addendum accompanying the names of famous personalities.

In Habib Luthfi's own view, the bin Yaḥyā family has generally been underrepresented in Bā ʿAlawī historiographical writing, and he blamed what he calls "the tribalism (*kesukuan*) of the leading *manṣabate* families" — like the āl-ʿAydarūs, āl-ʿAṭṭās, āl-Shaykh Abū Bakr, and āl-Ḥabashī — for this. In his view, the genealogists and the chroniclers have been dominated by such families and have consciously excluded the history of other Bā ʿAlawī families, like the bin Yaḥyā.[196] "Rather than transforming tribal culture into sedentary culture, many of those families have become tribalized," Habib Luthfi explained to me. He continued:

> Don't think too far. Look at Bagir [the current *manṣab* of Pekalongan]. Whenever he holds gatherings, he only talks about his family and his grandfathers. He does not talk about the history and biography of other branches of the al-ʿAṭṭās families, let alone other Bā ʿAlawī families like the bin Yaḥyā. All these families are Bā ʿAlawīs. Why do we have to continue acting as if we are members of different tribes?

At least from his explanation, Habib Luthfi seems to oppose the historical segmentation of the Bā ʿAlawīs into different families. Nevertheless his own genealogical project seems to be exclusively geared towards resuscitating the history of the bin Yaḥyā family, particularly his own lineage. The pages of the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tomes, filled with the names of his ancestors, are the fixed arena for Habib Luthfi's genealogical project. The point is to fill the blanks next to the names with biographical narratives. Nevertheless, the struggle for biographical addenda takes place outside the textual realm of genealogical tomes.

Genealogical Talk

Throughout my two years of interaction with Habib Luthfi, I witnessed numerous interactions between Habib Luthfi and his disciples or guests centered on genealogical talk. In some cases,

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[196] The *manṣabate* families, as I have discussed in chapter 1, are those who had ventured into the tribal territories, established *manṣabate,* and exercised spiritual power (*sulṭa rūḥiyya*) over their tribal *jamāʿas*. They are known for producing miracle-working saints whose biographies filled the pages of Bā ʿAlawī genealogical and other historiographical corpus.

Habib Luthfi would also enter into genealogical talk while delivering a sermon. I have never seen him more lively than when talking about genealogy. Traditionalist Muslim scholars in Java are aware of Habib Luthfi's vast knowledge of not only the genealogy of the Bā ʿAlawīs, but also that of Javanese royal, scholarly, and saintly dynasties. For this reason, he is always invited to deliver the main sermon during the commemorations (*ḥawl*) of the nine saints of Java, like those of Sunan Ampel in Surabaya and Sunan Gunung Jati in Cirebon. During such lectures, he discursively performs his genealogical knowledge, clarifying whose son or grandson is A, who the students or teachers of B were, what the connections between C and D were, when and where F died, and so forth.[197] Whenever he talks about notable saints or scholars he would mention their genealogies, from father to grandfather, all the way back to either the Prophet or to the pre-Islamic Javanese kings of Majapahit. Habib Luthfi's ability to perform his genealogical knowledge won him the respect of leading traditionalist Muslim scholars, who tend to refer to him whenever they need to consult on genealogical matters.

Habib Luthfi also recounted his own genealogy during lectures or as part of informal conversations. He tends to talk about his own genealogy whenever he is surrounded by his disciples and *jamāʿa.* His eyes brim with excitement as he recounts stories about his ancestors. "Write it down," he instructs his students every time he is about to shift the conversation into genealogy, recounting stories of different individuals from the bin Yaḥyā family, where they lived, where they traveled to, where they died, who their teachers were, and where their descendants are located today. What I noticed from the many genealogical talks I have witnessed

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[197] One Malaysian Anthropologist, who listened to Habib Luthfi's sermon at a conference in Jakarta whispered to me how listening to Habib Luthfi is like listening to a jazz performance in that during the talk he intermittently forays into genealogical recounting akin to Jazz musician performing an improvisation against an accelerando.

is that whenever he talks about historical members of his family he always makes connections to famous Bā ʿAlawī saints, scholars and founders of *ḥawṭas* (sacred settlements), as if embedding the oral stories about the lesser-known figures on the written and recorded biographies of the more known Bā ʿAlawīs. At the same time, he connects some of them to Javanese royal and scholarly dynasties.

Let me illustrate this with Habib Luthfi's description of his ancestor, who first came from Ḥaḍramawt to Java, Muḥammad al-Qāḍī b. Ṭāha bin Yaḥyā (d. 1168/1754). The following transcript was taken from a conversation that took place in Habib Luthfi's library around two in the morning. There were around thirty disciples in the room, most of whom had come to Pekalongan for the *kliwonan* gathering:

> Habib Muḥammad al-Qāḍī studied with his father, uncles, and other great Bā ʿAlawī imams, including Habib ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAṭṭās [founder of the *ḥawṭa* of Ḥurayḍa see: chapter 1]. He was a contemporary of Imam al-Ḥaddād [see: chapter 2]. He was among the great scholars of *ḥadīth*. He traveled around the Middle East, Africa, Fez, Tangier, Marrakech, and the Comoros. Wherever he traveled, he built mosques. He built more than five hundred mosques. He then traveled to India, to Naserabad, Ahmadabad, Jaypur, and studied under the al-ʿAydarūs scholars of Surat. He built mosques in the villages of India, where the majority of the population were Hindus. Many embraced Islam through him… [1 minute silence]… Then he entered Malaya. At the time, there was a Bā ʿAlawī scholar living in Trengganu, Habib Yāsīn b. ʿAqīl bin Yaḥyā, a student of Imam al-Ḥaddād. He lived with Habib Yāsīn in Trengganu and became known as *Quṭb al-ʿUlūm,* (the axial saint of the sciences). Then Habib Muḥammad went to Penang and established an Islamic school there. From Penang he went to [the Sultanate of] Banten, where he was appointed as the *shaykh al-akbar* (the greatest shaykh) by the Sultan. The Dutch were eyeing him, but through his strategies Habib Muḥammad was able to expand his influence without confronting them directly. Then he went to Cirebon, and finally to Semarang where he became known as *Kyai Ageng* Semarang (the great *kyai* of Semarang). His students rose to become eminent scholars. Among them was Prince Mangkubumi, who became HB I [Hamengku Buwono I, the first Sultan of Yogyakarta].

In this genealogical talk, Habib Luthfi presents a portrait of a mobile Bā ʿAlawī scholar that resonates with the biographies of famous and "successful" Bā ʿAlawī personalities that can be

found in their expanded format in the biographical encyclopedias (*tarājim*) and in their capsule form in the biographical addenda next to their names in the genealogical tomes.[198] It is a variation on an established theme of a "successful" Bā ʿAlawī, a success built on the combination of scholarship, sanctity, mobility, and worldly position. As such, Habib Luthfi presents the figure of Muḥammad al-Qāḍī as someone who deserves a mention in the Bā ʿAlawī historiography, but has not gotten one. Through genealogical talk, Habib Luthfi attempts to incorporate his ancestors — like Muḥammad al-Qāḍī — into Bā ʿAlawī or Javanese histories.

The problem with genealogical talk is that as a semiotic form, oral discourse tends to be less enduring. Despite Habib Luthfi's persistent effort to instruct his listeners to transcribe his oral account, not many of them actually do. Even those who do tend not to have notebooks with them, and write down the genealogical talk on foolscaps which can easily be misplaced. There are only two or three disciples who always have their notebooks or mobile-phone recorders ready and would write down and record their teacher's discourse. At the same time, the audience of such genealogical talks is usually limited to his disciples, while the veracity of such talks is primarily based on Habib Luthfi's authority. Consequently, they are easily rejected by those who do not recognize his authority. Many times, I heard from the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan, that

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[198] Such a biography usually begins with educational connections with reputable Bā ʿAlawī scholars (like al-ʿAṭṭās and al-Ḥaddād) in Ḥaḍramawt, proselytizing mobility around the Indian Ocean, and finally settling down in a hostland, where they formed connections to local elites. At other times, Habib Luthfi also orally recounted the history of some other members of the bin Yaḥyā family, highlighting not only their connection to the Javanese ruling elites, but also to the nine saints of Java. Here is an example:

> Sayyid ʿUmar b. Aḥmad bin Yaḥyā, also known as Pangeran Syarif of Jepara, was married to the daughter of Princess Juminah. Princess Juminah was the daughter of Sultan Agung b. Panembahan Senapati [the greatest ruler of Mataram]. One of his descendants, ʿAbdallāh became known as the *Ki Gede Pekalongan* (the big scholar/ruler of Pekalongan), and his brother Muḥammad was known as *Ki Ageng Pekalongan* (the great scholar/ruler of Pekalongan). Another brother, Ḥusayn became one of the earliest *mufti* of the Mataram Sultanate. He married the daughter of the *bupati* of Wiradesa, Muḥammad Jayengrono b. Qāsim b. Amir Rahmatillah — known as the Sunan Sendangluhur — b. ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlī, known as Sunan Bedilan. This ʿAlī was the brother of Sunan Ampel [one of the nine saints of Java].

Habib Luthfi tends to make things up, or *mengada-ada*, meaning to make present something that is not present.

Genealogical Aperture

At times, authoritative Bā ʿAlawī genealogical texts — or canonical texts to use Ho's (2006) term — may provide an aperture that can be utilized to establish transitional links between genealogical talk and genealogical text. One illustrative example of this is a capsule biographical narrative of someone from the bin Yaḥyā family who is only known by the moniker Ṭāhir, in one of the authoritative Bā ʿAlawī genealogical compilations, the *Shams al-ẓahīra.* While Ṭāhir is a proper name commonly used by the Bā ʿAlawīs, the biographical narrative describes it ambiguously as either a proper name or a title. At the same time, the text does not provide the name of Ṭāhir's father or his genealogy:

> From among the notables of this family is a person who was called Ṭāhir (*yudʿā ṭāhiran*), who went to the island of Penang in the beginning of the nineteenth century and there he married the daughter of the Sultan of Yogyakarta.[199] Then he accompanied the Sultan to Java and settled down in Semarang. Such was the description given by the Dutch orientalist Van den Berg in his book on the Arab population [of the Dutch East Indies]. He also said: two of Ṭāhir's children remained in their Arabness (*baqī ithnān min abnāʾ ṭāhir ʿalā ʿurūbatihimā*). The third son, known as Aḥmad, became Javanized (*ṣār jāwiyan*) and was known by the title Sumodirjo. He actively took part in the war of Dipanegara. When the war ended in 1830, he settled in Pekalongan and married one of the daughters of the Bā ʿAbūd sayyid family. His son, Ṣāliḥ became part of the city's government, known as Raden Sumoputra, and rose to become the chief attorney (*jaksa*) of Cilacap. He was then appointed as the chief of police in Pekalongan. When he retired, he went back to wearing Arab dress and married one of his daughters to an Arab from Ḥaḍramawt (al-Mashhūr [1911] 1984: 324).

Le me briefly explain the context of this narrative. The *Shams al-ẓahīra* was initially written in 1890 by the Bā ʿAlawī *mufti* of Tarīm and master genealogist, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad

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[199] Sultan Hamengku Buwono II, the second ruler of the *kraton* of Yogyakarta, was exiled to Penang in July 1812, following the kingdom's surrender to the British forces and the appointment of his son as the British-backed Hamengku Buwono III. See: Carey 2008:352-363.

al-Mashhūr (d. 1320/1902), as an abridgment of his seven-volume genealogical tome kept in Tarīm and in the office of the Rabithah Alawiyyah in Jakarta (Ho 2006: 240). The book was first printed in Hyderabad in 1911 and was subsequently republished in Jeddah in 1984 with copious biographical footnotes describing notable members of each Bā ʿAlawī family in Ḥaḍramawt and in the diaspora, prepared by an Indonesian Bā ʿAlawī scholar Muḥammad Dhiya Shahab. In compiling the extensive footnotes, Shahab relied on Bā ʿAlawī texts like hagiographies and histories, other non-Bā ʿAlawī sources including the ethnographic work of the Dutch scholar Van den Berg, and even newspaper articles. The footnotes enrich the list of names and families in the original text with colorful historical narratives. While strictly speaking, the footnotes are later additions to the *Shams al-ẓahīra*, today they are not regarded by the Bā ʿAlawīs in Indonesia as a separate text for in the Islamic manuscript tradition, a text is cumulative. In other words, the latest and widely used version of the *Shams al-ẓahīra* is an example of a successful interlacing of two texts written by two authors into a unified text.

The biographical description of Ṭāhir and his descendants quoted above does not come from the original text of the *Shams al-ẓahīra*. It appears in a fourteen-page footnote on famous personalities from the bin Yaḥyā family written by Shahab. Indeed, Shahab explicitly mentions that the information comes from Van den Berg's 1886 (1989) ethnographic work, *Le Hadhramout et les colonies arabes dans l'archipel Indien.* At the same time, while Shahab incorporates Van den Berg's narrative into the text, he does not provide any genealogical information for Ṭāhir, except for mentioning him as a member of the bin Yaḥyā family. Probably Shahab himself was not aware of Ṭāhir's genealogy. The presence of a name with biographical addendum in one of the most authoritative Bā ʿAlawī genealogical text, combined with the

absence of a clear genealogy opens up what I call a *genealogical aperture,* which allows other actors — particularly those with knowledge of genealogy — to extend a proprietary claim on the name by superimposing it into an available genealogy. Such an opening, however, is limited by several other pieces of information given in the text, including: (1) Ṭāhir is a member of the bin Yaḥyā family, and (2) he has a son called Aḥmad (Sumodirjo), and a grandson named Ṣāliḥ (Sumoputra). The prospect of reclaiming the mysterious Ṭāhir is quite appealing for he is described as someone with affinal ties to the *kraton* of Yogyakarta, whose son was involved in the Java War with Prince Dipanegara (see chapter 1), a figure who in post-colonial Indonesia has achieved legendary status as the greatest Javanese national hero.[200] At the same time, Ṭāhir's biography is not only featured in a Bā ʿAlawī genealogical text, but also in a Western ethnographic work. The veracity of Ṭāhir's biography is therefore sustained by two different regimes of knowledge.

In his genealogical talks, Habib Luthfi claims the mysterious Ṭāhir in the *Shams al-ẓahīra* as his own ancestor. In his view, Ṭāhir is not a proper name, but a title — *al-sayyid al-ṭāhir* (the pure sayyid) — borne by his ancestor Ṭāha, the son of the aforementioned Muḥammad al-Qāḍī. In one of his genealogical talks, Habib Luthfi recounts Ṭāha b. Muḥammad:

> Habib Ṭāha was born in ʿInāt [Ḥaḍramawt]. His mother was from the family of the *manṣab* of ʿInāt, that was why he was born there. He studied under great scholars of Ḥaḍramawt like Habib ʿAlī b. Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭās [founder of the *manṣabate* of Mashhad] and Imam al-Haddād. Following his studies in Ḥaḍramawt, Habib Ṭāha traveled to Penang to see his father [Muḥammad al-Qāḍī] who had established an Islamic school there. He taught at the school and was involved in a battle with the British. He then went to Semarang where his father had settled down, and then accompanied HB II [Hamengku Buwono II, the second Sultan of

[200] Thus in his celebrated book, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson (1991: 11-12) used the figure of Prince Dipanegara to exemplify his point that "if nation-states are widely conceded to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and still more important, glide into a limitless future." Anderson noted how the Prince has been treated as an important Indonesian national hero although his "own memoirs show that he intended to 'conquer [not liberate!] *Java'* rather than expel 'the Dutch.'

> Yogyakarta] to his exile in Penang. He married one of the daughters of HB II. He was known as *al-sayyid al-ṭāhir.* You can all check his biography in the *Shams al-ẓahīra.* He died in Penang.

Note how Habib Luthfi superimposed Ṭāha b. Muḥammad to the mysterious Ṭāhir. On the one hand, genealogical talk furnishes Ṭāhir with a clear genealogy — as Ṭāhir/Ṭāha b. Muḥammad al-Qāḍī — and background history, both of which are left unspoken in the brief textual biography. On the other hand, by superimposing Ṭāhir onto Ṭāha b. Muḥammad, Habib Luthfi is able to finally point to a Bā ʿAlawī textual source deemed to be authoritative to corroborate his genealogical talk. The presence of Ṭāhir's biography and the absence of his genealogy therefore makes him into a genealogical aperture that can facilitate a dialogical alignment between text and talk. The text corroborates, and is enriched by, the talk.
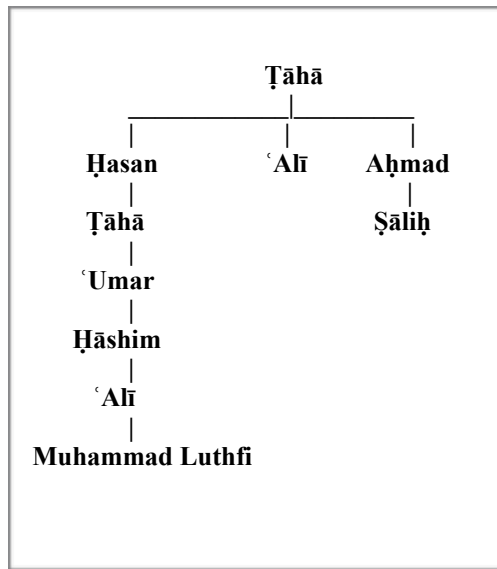
Figure 8.2: Habib Luthfi's genealogy in the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tome
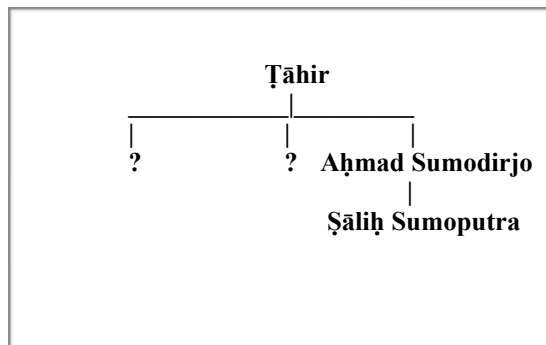
Figure 8.3: Ṭāhir and his descendants in the *Shams al-ẓahīra.*

At the same time, one cannot simply dismiss Habib Luthfi as "making things up" or *mengada-ada* as indeed the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tome does record Ṭāha b. Muḥammad as having several sons, one of whom was Aḥmad, who in turn begot Ṣāliḥ.[201] In other words, there is a triangular alignment between the *Shams al-ẓahīra*, Habib Luthfi's genealogical talk, and the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tome (Buku Induk Silsilah). The question is therefore whether Ṣāliḥ b. Aḥmad b. Ṭāha was indeed Ṣāliḥ Sumoputra b. Aḥmad Sumodirjo b. Ṭāhir. In addition, the biographical addendum in the *Shams al-ẓahīra* only mentions the name of one of the three sons of Ṭāhir. Habib Luthfi's own lineal ancestor, Ḥasan is not mentioned. Nevertheless, the triangular alignment between the *Shams al-ẓahīra* (and Van den Berg's *Le Hadhramout*), Habib Luthfi's genealogical talk, and his own genealogical record in the Bā ʿAlawī tomes, already supports an important genealogical claim, namely that through Ṭāha/Ṭāhir's marriage to the daughter of the second Sultan of Yogyakarta, Habib Luthfi is a descendant of the Mataram royal dynasty. Habib Luthfi further enriches the biographical record in the *Shams al-ẓahīra* by claiming that his ancestor Ḥasan — the brother of Aḥmad (Sumodirjo) and the son of the Sultan's daughter — was known as Ḥasan Sumodinigrat. Like his brother Aḥmad, he also fought for Prince Dipanegara during the Java War, and was known as the *senopati agung,* or the great commander of the army of *kraton* Yogyakarta.

[201] The access to the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tomes (*Buku Induk Silsilah*) is restricted to the genealogical officers of the Rabithah 'Alawiyyah. I thank Abdurrahman Basurroh for checking Habib Luthfi's genealogy for me.
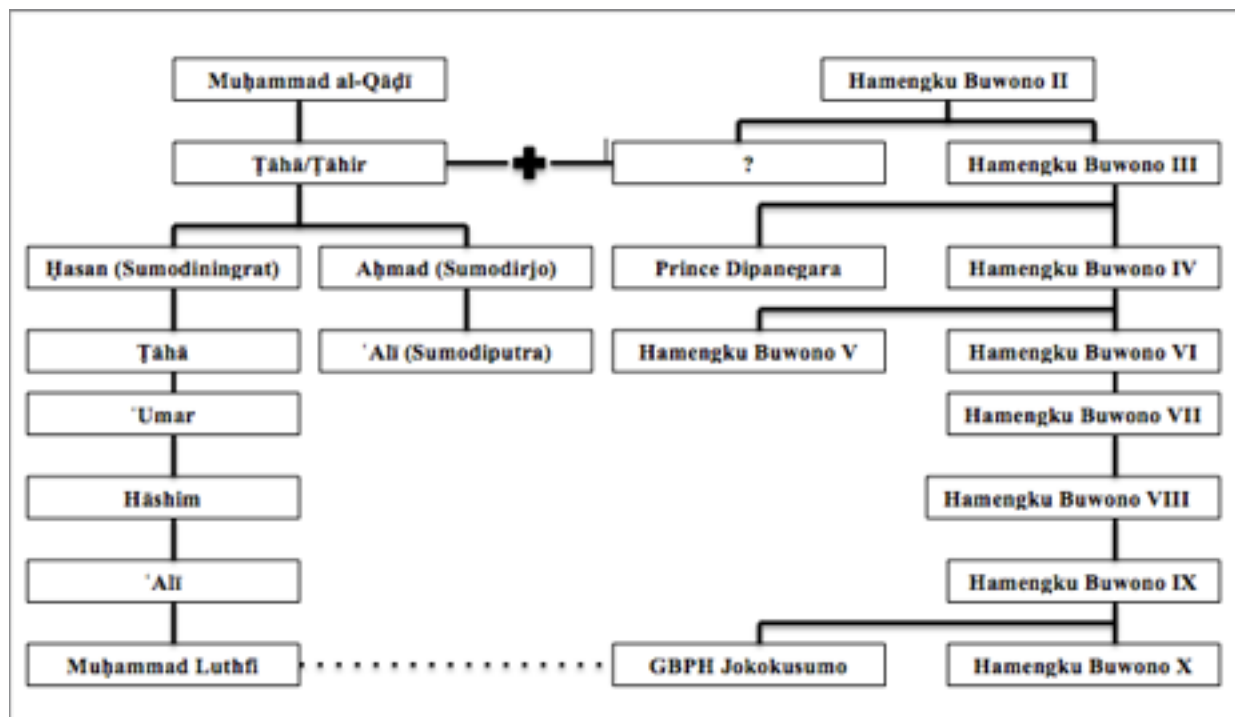
Figure 8.4: The conjoined genealogies of Habib Luthfi and the *kraton* of Yogyakarta

Habib Luthfi's claim over his Mataram genealogy was reinforced through his personal relationship with the younger brother of the current Sultan, G.B.P.H Joyokusumo, who for several years had become his *ṭarīqa* disciple. Habib Luthfi had developed a relationship with Gusti (Prince) Joyo, as he was usually called, through the former's Yogyakarta-based disciples, many of whom were connected to the *kraton*. Habib Luthfi's knowledge of Javanese, particularly Mataram, history together with his sensitivity to Javanese culture attracted Gusti Joyo, who in turn regarded him with utmost respect. Several times a year, Gusti Joyo visited Pekalongan, and he invited Habib Luthfi to Yogyakarta to lead Islamic gatherings at the *kraton*. As the Sultanate's *Penghageng Kawedanan Hageng Panitra Putra* — a post akin to a secretary of state — Gusti Joyo was able to support Habib Luthfi's genealogical project. Through his mediation, Habib Luthfi was able to obtain his own *serat kekancingan,* a genealogical certificate issued by the

Sultanate's genealogical office — the *Tepas Darah Dalem* — to those who can prove genealogical relation to the dynasty.[202] Habib Luthfi's own *serat kekancingan,* authorized by the seal of the Sultanate, thus becomes another piece of documentary evidence that corroborates his genealogical talk.[203] I will return to Habib Luthfi's relationship to Gusti Joyo at the end of this chapter.

An Old Genealogy for a New Ritual

While genealogical talk enriches genealogical texts, without inscribing such talk in a more durable semiotic form, the talk may be gradually forgotten. This is why Habib Luthfi has persistently instructed his disciples to commit his genealogical talk into writing. One student did that. In 2014, a book entitled *Sejarah Maulid Nabi: Sejak Khaizuran hingga Habib Luthfi bin Yahya* (History of the Prophetic *Mawlid*: From Khaizuran to Habib Luthfi bin Yahya), written by Habib Luthfi's disciple and personal secretary Ahmad Tsauri (b. 1985) was published. The book traces the history of the *mawlid* celebration from the time of the Abbasid Empire to the annual event held at the *Kanzus Shalawat*. Tsauri begins the book with a chapter on the meaning and social efficacy of celebration, drawing on modern anthropological and sociological works to highlight the importance of celebration and commemoration to human sociality, which seems to be a defensive gesture toward Salafi critics of commemorative rituals. In the following chapter he charts the history of the *mawlid* celebration in the times of the Abbasid, Fatimids, Ayyubids,

[202] According to a disciple of Habib Luthfi, who lived in Yogyakarta, and is still related to the *kraton*, the documentary evidence presented to the *Tepas Darah Dalem* to obtain a *serat kekancingan* was Habib Luthfi's genealogy together with the *shams al-ẓahīra* and Van den Berg's *Le Hadhramout.* At the same time, Gusti Joyo's personal involvement in the process ensured its success. After all, as the *Penghageng Kawedanan Hageng Panitra Putra*, Gusti Joyo oversees the day to day administration of the *kraton*. It is his signature that is needed to legitimize a *serat kekancingan*.

[203] Gusti Joyo also provided several Yogyakarta-based disciples of Habib Luthfi, who have been given a task by their teacher to look for further documentary evidence pointing to Ḥasan (Sumodiningrat), with preferred access to the royal archive.

and Mamluk Empires, based on classical Arabic biographical and historiographical texts of Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Khallikān, and al-Ṣuyūṭī as well as modern historical works on the history of *mawlid*, like that of Nico Kaptein (1993a). In another chapter Tsauri describes the celebrations of the *mawlid* as practiced in different parts of the Muslim world, together with the history of the *mawlid* as it has been practiced in Indonesia. The penultimate chapter specifically focuses on the *mawlid* held at the *Kanzus Shalawat*. Tsauri describes the *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat* as a long tradition that has been passed down through generations among the Bā ʿAlawī *sayyids* of the bin Yaḥyā family (2014: 184).

Since its publication, three thousand copies have been sold. The 285-page heavily-footnoted book — with a foreword from Habib Luthfi — has begun to be recognized by Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* as the official history of the annual *mawlid* at *Kanzus Shalawat*. The book is not only sold at the *Kanzus Shalawat*, but is distributed to the campus bookshops of the leading traditionalist *pesantrens* in Java. What is important for the current purpose is the way in which this new official history presents the *mawlid* at *Kanzus Shalawat* not as Habib Luthfi's own innovation, but as an inherited tradition passed down through his lineage. Based on an interview with Habib Luthfi, Tsauri describes how the annual *mawlid* is a continuation of a tradition instituted by Habib Luthfi's ancestor, the aforementioned Ṭāha/Ṭāhir:

> The Great *mawlid* (*mawlid akbar*) at Kanzus Shalawat has a long history. The annual event organized by Habib Luthfi is a continuation of a *mawlid* tradition that was instituted by Sayyid Ṭāha, also known as Sayyid Ṭāhir, whose full name is Habib Ṭāha b. Muḥammad al-Qāḍī bin Yaḥyā (d. 1202). It is said when Sayyid Ṭāha began calling people to Allāh (*daʿwa ilā Allāh*) in Java, he used *mawlid* as his medium, complete with *rebana* and Javanese *gending* (gamelan music) to accompany the singing of the praise to the Prophet… During his life, Habib Ṭāha was known as a very knowledgable scholar, particularly in the science of *ḥadīth* and *fiqḥ* (law). At first, Habib Ṭāha lived in Penang, Malaysia. Then, he traveled and proselytized in Banten, Cirebon, Surabaya, and finally Semarang. Habib Ṭāha died and was

buried in Semarang. Another opinion suggests that towards the end of his life, he returned to Penang, died, and was buried there. Habib Ṭāha had fourteen children, eleven sons and three daughters, all of them were known as saints and great scholars.

When Habib Ṭāha passed away, his *mawlid* tradition was continued by his sons, particularly Habib Ḥasan, who lived and proselytized in Kramat Jati, Semarang. Habib Ḥasan had for a while lived in Pekalongan, but he died and was buried in Semarang. During his life, Habib Ḥasan fought valiantly against the Dutch colonizers and was feared by them. He fought along the northern coast of Java. His courage and indefatigability won him the appellation *Singo Barong* [lion like mythological creature and leader of the hosts of good]. When Habib Ḥasan passed away, the *mawlid* tradition was continued by his eldest son, Habib Ṭāha of Ciledug [West Java] and his younger siblings.

After the death of Habib Ṭāha b. Ḥasan, the *mawlid* tradition was continued by his sons: Habib Ḥāshim, a reputable scholar who died in Medina, and Habib Muḥsin who lived and proselytized in Kutai, East Kalimantan and was buried in the Sinumpak Island in Kalimantan. The *mawlid* of Habib Ṭāha b. Ḥasan was also continued by his other son, Habib ʿUmar b. Ṭāha who established a *pesantren* in Sindang Laut, Cirebon [West Java]. That *pesantren* produced eminent scholars who rose to prominence in Cirebon and West Java.

When Habib ʿUmar passed away, the *mawlid* tradition that has been handed down for several generations was continued by one of his sons, Habib Ḥāshim. Habib Ḥāshim was the first Bā ʿAlawī scholar to establish a *pesantren* in Pekalongan. Before Habib Ḥāshim, there were several *pesantrens* in Pekalongan that were established by the *kyais,* among others, *kyai* Khomsa in Landungsari, *kyai* Agus in Kenayagan, *kyai* Murtado in Sampangan, *kyai* Abdul Aziz in Banyu Urip, and others. Together with Habib Hāshim, those *kyais* worked hand in hand to institute a *mawlid* tradition as a medium for proselytization. Through the *mawlid* people became aware of the teachings of Islam, understood the Qurʾān and the *sunna*, as well as social ethics (*etika bermasyarakat*). Through the *mawlid* people became acquainted with the bearer of the Qurʾān, our leader, the Prophet Muḥammad

…

At the time, aside from the great *mawlid* that was organized by Habib Hāshim in Pekalongan, there were two other big *mawlids* in Java. The first was instituted by Habib Shaykh b. Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ in Surabaya (East Java) and the second was that of Habib ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās in Empang Bogor (West Java). The *mawlid* of Habib Hāshim was performed at the Masjid al-Nur. The *jamāʿa* filled the street, from the junction of the Mas Mansur street, to the junction of Kenanga street. Habib Hāshim also installed beautiful decorations for the event.

…

Since his youth, Habib Hāshim has dedicated his life for religion. Since establishing a *pesantren* in Pekalongan, the *mawlid* event became bigger, attracting a huge crowd that consequently drew the attention of the colonizers. Nevertheless, the colonizers did not have any strong reason to ban the activity because the *mawlid* of Habib Hāshim did not have any political tendencies (*tendensi politik*). More importantly, Habib Hāshim was very influential. Even scholars as great as Shaykh Hasyim Asy'ari [the founder of NU] and *kyai* Amir of Pekalongan all put Habib Hāshim as their source of authority. For that reason, the colonizers chose to approach Habb Hāshim carefully.

> When Habib Hāshim passed away, the *mawlid* was continued by his children and sons-in-law, albeit not as big as it used to be, and finally his grandson [Habib Luthfi]. The *mawlid* tradition has therefore been persistently carried out from generation to generation (*turun temurun*) until today (Tasuri 2014: 184-9).

The book thus provides an old genealogy for the new ritual, positing Habib Luthfi as a lineal successor of an old Bā ʿAlawī line of spiritual leadership in Java.

There are several points to note from the above history of the annual *mawlid*. First, by positing Ṭāha/Ṭāhir as the institutor of the *mawlid* tradition, the text avails itself to a discursive alignment with other texts including the *Shams al-ẓahīra* and Habib Luthfi's *kraton*-issued *serat kekancingan.* After all, it was Ṭāha/Ṭāhir who has been described as the son-in-law of Hamengku Buwono II. Secondly, the history of the *mawlid* reinforces Ṭāha/Ṭāhir's son, Ḥasan (Sumodinigrat) as someone who was involved in armed struggle against the Dutch, although it does not specifically mention the Java War or Prince Dipanegara. Thirdly, the history presents all of Habib Luthfi's ancestors as scholars and religious authorities who had left their marks on the history of Java. The annual *mawlid* at the *Kanzus Shalawat* is presented as a lineally inherited tradition. Note also the absence of Habib Luthfi's Naqshabandī or Shādhilī *silsilās*, or any mention of Shaykh Abdul Malik or the annual *mawlid* at Kedungparuk (see: chapter 5). In short, the *mawlid* is presented as a specifically bin Yaḥyā-Bā ʿAlawī tradition.

In discussing Habib Luthfi's direct grandfather, Hāshim (d. 1350/1930) — who first migrated to Pekalongan — the history does not mention his leading Bā ʿAlawī contemporary, namely, the principal saint of Pekalongan, Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās who also established an annual *mawlid* that is continued to be held at the *al-Rawḍa* mosque. Rather, Hāshim's annual *mawlid* is posited as the only big *mawlid* in Pekalongan at the time and is compared to two other

big Bā ʿAlawī *mawlids*: that of Shaykh b. Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ in Surabaya and ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās in Bogor. Such a comparison is significant precisely because these two Bā ʿAlawī scholars — together with Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās of Pekalongan — are highly regarded by the Indonesian Bā ʿAlawīs as their leading saints. Their annual commemorations have continued to draw the participation of leading Bā ʿAlawī scholars and *manṣabs* as well as thousands of traditionalist Muslims. In addition, as I have mentioned in chapter 4, ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin of Bogor established the *manṣabate* of Bogor, whose descendants continue to perform the role of a *manṣab* to the present day, just like Habib Bagir in Pekalongan. What I am trying to point out here is that the absence of the patron saint of Pekalongan from the narrative, together with an explicit comparison of Hāshim's *mawlid* with that of the Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabate* of Bogor, seems to suggest one central point: that there was — and still is — a legitimate Bā ʿAlawī bin Yaḥyā *manṣabate* in Pekalongan, one with historical links not only to the *kraton* of Yogyakarta, but also to the premier traditionalist Islamic organization, the Nahdlatul 'Ulama (NU). Hāshim's authority was not only recognized by his fellow Bā ʿAlawīs but also by traditionalist *kyais*, including the founder of NU. As such, the book's NU-oriented readership ought to recognize the historical existence of the bin Yaḥyā *manṣabate* of Pekalongan.

Presently, it is too early to assess the book's influence. What is clear, however, is that by writing the book, Tsauri has entextualized Habib Luthfi's genealogical talk, lodging it in a more durable semiotic form and liberating it from "the finite horizon of its author" (Ricoeur 1973: 95). Transformed into text, the genealogical talk has the potential to generate new publics beyond the limited confines of Habib Luthfi's disciples or *jamāʿa*. Such potential is aided by the fact that the book presents itself as a universal history of the *mawlid*, and that the discussion of Habib

Luthfi's *mawlid* is only one chapter in a long history of the ritual that begins with the Abbasid empress dowager al-Khayzurān (d. 172/789) to the present-day Indonesia. Consequently, the book may attract a wider readership through its wide circulation in the *pesantren* circuit. While the discussion of the genealogy of Habib Luthfi's *mawlid* is solely based on genealogical talk, the rest of the book is heavily referenced and footnoted pointing to classical Islamic historical sources, Raffles' *History of Java*, and contemporary Western social theories. Such textual apparatuses — which the postmodern historian Keith Jenkins, following Roland Barthes, once described as constituting historiography's "reality effects" (1992) — may further strengthen the veracity of the genealogical talk that is nested in their midst, particularly for the university-educated readership who accept the legitimacy and validity of Western regime of knowledge. For the time being, however, this must remain a speculation.

Spatial Composition of Genealogy

In a speech delivered during the annual commemoration of Sunan Ampel — one of the nine saints of Java — in Surabaya, Habib Luthfi criticized the ongoing Saudi state-led destruction of historical sites connected to the Prophet Muḥammad in Mecca and Medina, which in his view could lead to the mythification of history:

> Hinduism cannot be regarded as a historical religion. Its teachings are based on mythology. And yet, if you go to India today, you can see the cushion of Dewi Sinta [Sita]. You can go and see the birthplace of Rama. These are mythological characters, and yet you can go and visit their remnants (*peninggalan*). They are well-kept and revered. These remnants reinforce people's belief that Rama and Sinta actually existed, that they are historical figures. Unlike Hinduism, Islam is a historical religion. The Prophet was a real historical figure and his companions were real. There are records and remnants attesting to their existence. And yet, Saudi Arabia and their Wahhabi scholars systematically destroy those remnants. The house of the Prophet was destroyed. The houses of his companions were destroyed. This is dangerous. Those remnants are concrete evidence (*bukti konkrit*) of their history. If this goes on, then one day people can say, "the Prophet is a mythological character, look there are no remnants

> pointing to his existence!" This is why we need to manage the tombs of our saints and scholars, like Sunan Ampel, whom we commemorate today. So that we can bring our grandchildren here and show them the tomb of Sunan Ampel. So that they know that the Lord Sunan (*kanjeng sunan*) was a historical figure, and not just some mythological character (*karakter mitos*).

Note how contrary to the assumption — articulated perhaps most famously by Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) — that secular time swallows up or banishes sacred realities like gods and spirits and other temporalities, in this speech Habib Luthfi actually emphasizes the role of secular time in legitimating sacred claims. He alludes to the importance of physical remnants and spatial sites as evidence of history. In the absence of historical records, physical sites can serve to corroborate orally-transmitted histories or genealogical talks. Indeed Habib Luthfi himself has personally led the construction of his ancestors' mausoleums across Java. Such spatial projects are intertwined with, and serve to corroborate, his genealogical talks and claims of spiritual lineage.

In the last decade, Habib Luthfi has built mausoleums on top of the graves of his ancestors, modeled on the mausoleums of well-known Bā ʿAlawī saints like that of Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās in Pekalongan (see: chapter 4). With the assistance of his *jamāʿa*, local governments, and local military commands, Habib Luthfi has been able to construct mausoleums over the graves of Ḥasan (Sumodiningrat) in Kramat Jati (Semarang, Central Java), his son Ṭāha in Cileduk (West Java), and his grandson ʿUmar in Indramayu (West Java). With the support of the local populations, these three projects were realized without significant problem.

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Figure 8.5: Habib Luthfi's ancestors and their burial sites.

Figure 8.6: The Mausoleum of ʿUmar b. Ṭāhā bin Yaḥyā, Indramayu, West Java.

There have been problems, however, in regards to the tombs of Ṭāha/Ṭāhir and Habib Luthfi's direct grandfather Hāshim and his father ʿAlī. Habib Luthfi insisted that Ṭāha/Ṭāhir was buried in Penang, and that his burial site is none other than the popular shrine Nagore Dargah located in the Little India of Georgetown, Penang (junction of Chulia and King street).[204] In its official history, at least, the shrine is not a burial site. Rather it is a cenotaph used by the Chulia diasporic community to commemorate their patron saint who was buried in India. While Habib Luthfi is personally interested in reclaiming the Nagore Dargah as the tomb of Ṭāhā/Ṭāhir, it is highly unlikely that he will be able to achieve anything, as the shrine is located in another country and outside his sphere of influence. At the same time, the shrine belongs to the Chulia community of Penang, who have been maintaining and looking after it. This, however, does not stop Habib Luthfi from pointing the shrine as the tomb of Ṭāhā/Ṭāhir in his genealogical talks to his disciples and *jamāʿa.* A framed portrait of the Nagore Dargah, with a caption stating it as the tomb of Ṭāha/Ṭāhir is hung on the wall of Habib Luthfi's library, visible to his guests and *jamāʿa*. In fact, during my fieldwork, there were at least twenty-eight disciples of Habib Luthfi who had gone to Penang for pilgrimage (*ziyāra*) to the tomb of Ṭāhā/Ṭāhir.

The second problem relates to the tombs of Habib Luthfi's grandfather Hāshim and his father ʿAlī who were buried side by side in the public cemetery of Sapuro, around four hundred meters from mausoleum of Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās. In 2005, Habib Luthfi decided to built a mausoleum over the graves of his father and grandfather. The building of the mausoleum angered the *manṣab*, who argued on several occasions — including on two events held at the al-

[204] The Nagore Dargah was built in the early 1800s by the Chulias, a South Indian ethnic group from the Coromandel Coast who had arrived in Penang following its establishment as a British trading post. The shrine was built as a satellite shrine, to honor the 13th century Muslim saint of Nagore, Tamil Nadu Syed Shah al-Hamid, and there are other similar shrines across southern Asia, including one in Singapore. See: Tschacher 2009.

Rawḍa mosque during my fieldwork — that building a mausoleum in a public cemetery is unlawful as the land does not belong to a particular family. The *manṣab* also reiterated the point that his great-grandfather's mausoleum was not built within the public cemetery but on a private land endowed by the al-Shahāb family, although the land adjoins the cemetery. Nevertheless, aside from his oral critiques, the *manṣab* did not pursue other avenues. While the two Bā ʿAlawī mausoleums are now coexisting side by side, compared to the al-ʿAṭṭās mausoleum and its constant flow of pilgrims, that of the bin Yaḥyā tends to be empty most of the time. Most pilgrims who come to visit the al-ʿAṭṭās mausoleum do not continue their pilgrimage to the bin Yaḥyā mausoleum. On certain occasions, however, like the eve of the *kliwonan* or the morning of the annual *Kanzus Shalawat mawlid*, the bin Yaḥyā mausoleum is filled with Habib Luthfi's disciples and *jamāʿa,* who gather there to recite the Qurʾān. While a mausoleum is a symbol of religious or more specifically saintly authority, there need to be other mechanisms and processes that enable it to become a meaningful pilgrimage destination. The al-ʿAṭṭās mausoleum has been a popular pilgrimage destination for a long time, owing to the annual commemoration, the continuous cultivation of *jamāʿas* by the three *manṣabs,* and the vast networks of other Bā ʿAlawī scholars in Indonesia and other countries. The bin Yaḥyā mausoleum, on the other hand, has only become a pilgrimage destination for the *jamāʿa* of Habib Luthfi, as neither Hāshim or ʿAlī are known as scholars or saints except through his genealogical talks. As such, its importance exclusively hinges on Habib Luthfi's authority over his *jamāʿa*.

Figure 8.7: The Mausoleum of Hāshim bin Yaḥyā, Sapuro Cemetery, Pekalongan.

Mausoleums are arguments. By building the mausoleums of his ancestors, Habib Luthfi is able to physically inscribe his saintly genealogy. The mausoleums form a spatial network of tombs that in turn serve as material attestations of Habib Luthfi's genealogical talks. The mausoleums — that in Java tend to be associated with saints, scholars, and kings — serve as extra-discursive historical/biographical addenda to the names of Habib Luthfi's ancestors, reinforcing their rights to be inscribed on the pages of the genealogical tomes. For example, the new marble tombstone of ʿUmar b. Ṭāha, enclosed by the new mausoleum, reads:

> This is the grave of our master, the noble Imam, the knower of Allāh, the great axial saint (*quṭb al-kabīr*), Habib ʿUmar b. Ṭāhā b. Ḥasan b. Ṭāhā b. Muḥammad b. Ṭāha bin Yaḥyā Bā ʿAlawī, the Ḥusaynī.

On the one hand, the tombstone proclaims ʿUmar as a great axial saint. On the other hand, the genealogical tomes do not have anything to say about ʿUmar, save for his name. As such, physical structures like mausoleums and physical inscriptions like tombstones work as arguments for historicity and discursive presence, questioning the biographical exclusions of certain biographies from the genealogical tomes.

Old Tombs, New Genealogies

Aside from building the mausoleums of his direct ancestors, Habib Luthfi has also been involved in building the mausoleums of other members of the bin Yaḥyā family whose biographies have not been included in the Bā ʿAlawī genealogical tomes. Among other bin Yaḥyā mausoleums that he has helped build are the tombs of (1) Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad bin Yaḥyā in Pulau Panjang, Jepara (Central Java); (2) Hāshim b. Mushayyakh bin Yaḥyā in Kutai Lama (East Kalimantan); (3) ʿUmar b. ʿAbdallāh bin Yaḥyā in Cirebon (West Java); (4) Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad bin Yaḥyā in Geritan (Pekalongan); and (5) Muḥammad b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥyā in Batang (Central Java). Unlike

the tombs of his direct ancestors, however, some of these tombs had prior histories tied to their localities. Some were believed by the locals to be saintly graves. In renaming these tombs and providing them with new bin Yaḥyā genealogies, Habib Luthfi thus opened himself to dispute with the locals. Nevertheless, his vast *jamāʿa*, together with his connections to state apparatuses have allowed him to gain the upper hand. At the same time, the new identities and genealogies have helped to elevate these local shrines into regional and even national pilgrimage destinations, resulting in concrete socio-economic benefits for the locals.

Take the tomb of Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad bin Yaḥyā (d. c.1755) in the hamlet of Geritan, Pekalongan. As discussed in the last chapter, Habib Luthfi was able to built this mausoleum in cooperation with the regent of Pekalongan and the army infantry battalion (*yonif*) 407. For a long time, this decrepit tomb was believed to be the grave of an obscure local Javanese saint known as Mbah Angsono. The tomb had been an important site of *local* pilgrimage. Almost a decade ago, Habib Luthfi publicly identified the tomb as belonging to Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad bin Yaḥyā, who, according to him, was a leading scholar in the court of the Mataram Sultan Pakubuwana II (d. 1749), the last ruler of the united Mataram Sultanate before its division into Yogyakarta and Surakarta. According to Habib Luthfi, Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad bin Yaḥyā was the brother of his ancestor Ṭāha/Ṭāhir.[205] With the backing of the regent of Pekalongan, the infantry division, and the local family who has acted as the hereditary caretaker of the tomb, Habib Luthfi embarked on a project of rebuilding the tomb. Today, the tomb rests within the enclosure of a new mausoleum that was officially opened in 2010.

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[205] Recall that according to Habib Luthfi, Abū Bakr's father, Muḥammad al-Qāḍī was the religious teacher of Prince Mangkubumi, the brother of Pakubuwana II, who became the first Sultan of Yogyakarta, following the division of the Mataram Sultanate into two *kratons.*

Despite popular acceptance from outside the village, most local people still persistently refer to the tomb as belonging to Mbah Angsono. Disgruntled locals have confronted the tomb's caretaker, protesting Ḥabīb Luthfi's appropriation of the tomb without any conclusive historical evidence. At the same time, these naysayers cannot really do anything about it as they cannot provide any alternative identity, genealogy, or history of the tomb. It is no surprise then that in the prospect of conflict over the identity of the tomb, the plaque commemorating the rebuilding of the mausoleum does not state either the name of the Arab Ḥabīb Abū Bakr or the Javanese Mbah Angsono. Rather it uses a more equivocal and accommodating description: "Makam Wali Agung Geritan" (The Tomb of the Great Saint of Geritan). Now who that great saint is, is open to interpretation. In a way this plaque illustrates Habib Luthfi's unfinished project of appropriation, which also indicates that one should not assume that his authority is without question.
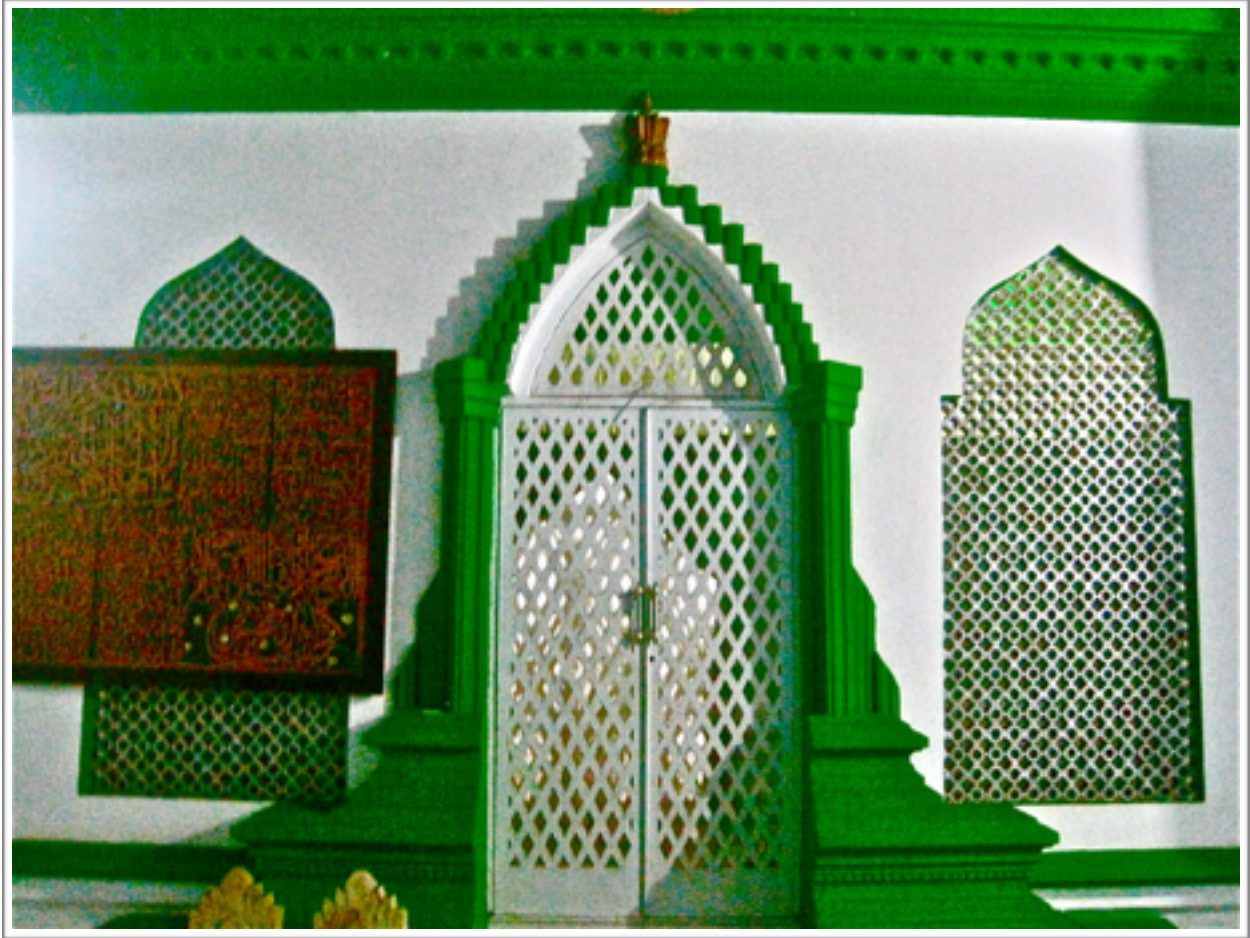
Figure 8.8: The tomb of Mbah Angsono/Habib Abū Bakr, Geritan

Since 2010, Habib Luthfi has basically taken over the guardianship of the tomb. He also organizes an annual commemoration for *Habib Abu Bakr* at the site. Owing to Ḥabīb Luthfi's prominence, the tomb has begun to attract pilgrims from faraway places. Among those who have visited the tomb are high-ranking government officials, politicians, and generals from Jakarta, as well as members of the Javanese royal family, including the aforementioned Gusti Joyo, all of whom consider themselves to be the *jamāʿa* of Habib Luthfi. Merchant stalls have also begun to emerge outside the mausoleum complex. The increasing volume of pilgrims to this revamped old site has created business opportunities for the locals. It is no surprise that while opposition to

Habib Luthfi's appropriation has remained among some locals, their tenor has generally weakened.

Figure 8.9: Commemorative plaque marking the renovation of the Geritan Mausoleum

Geritan is now a bourgeoning pilgrimage site, despite the absence of historical records attesting to the identity of the saint entombed there. Rather, Habib Luthfi's prominent position in diverse networks, and his expansive *jamāʿa*, enabled him to draw people to the revamped tomb, thereby generating economic opportunities for the locals. As such, the veracity of the tomb's new historical identity and genealogy is attested not by textual sources, but by its social consequences. At the same time, Geritan's new history was built on the exclusion of local histories that are more or less dormant for the time being, but may reemerge in the future.

A similar dynamic has occurred in regards to the tomb of Muḥammad b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥyā in the village of Kedung Dowo, Batang (Central Java). Previously the tomb was believed to inter the body of a mysterious local saint, Mbah Surgi Jatikusumo. Here, Habib Luthfi combined both names, arguing that Surgi Jatikusumo was not a proper name, but the title of Muḥammad b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥya bestowed by the *kraton* of Yogyakarta. The new tombstone reads:

> This is the grave of the Knower of Allāh (*al-ʿārif bi-llāh*), the most knowledgable (*al-ʿallāma*) the majestic sayyid, the noble, the distinguished, our master the Imam, Habib Muḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Ṭāhā bin Yaḥyā Bā ʿAlawi, known famously as (*al-shahīr*) *Kyai* Surgi Jatikusumo. He died in 1253 [1837] after the migration of the Prophet, upon him God's salutation and peace.

Unlike in Geritan, Habib Luthfi did not attempt to erase the older name. Rather, he added another name alongside the old name, providing it with a Prophetic genealogy and association with the royal court. According to Habib Luthfi, Mbah Surgi/Muḥammad b. Ḥasan was the son of the aforementioned Ḥasan (Sumodinigrat) and grandson of Ṭāha/Ṭāhir, who fought valiantly for Prince Dipanegara during the Java War and died in a skirmish with the Dutch almost a decade after the war. The villagers of Kedung Dowo do not object to Habib Luthfi's renaming of the shrine, as they themselves are not aware of Mbah Surgi's history. The assistant (*carik*) of the village head told me how, "through Habib Luthfi we now know that Mbah Surgi was an offspring of the Prophet (*putro wayahe kanjeng nabi*) and a national hero (*pahlawan nasional*)." Every year Habib Luthfi organizes a commemoration for Mbah Surgi as part of the RMKS *mawlid* network. The commemoration is attended by the regent of Batang, military officers of the local area command, the chief of police, and around two thousand of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa*.

Figure 8.10: Pilgrims at the mausoleum of Mbah Surgi/Muḥammad b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥyā.

Figure 8.11: The new tomb of Mbah Surgi/Muḥammad b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥyā.

Through Habib Luthfi's interventions, these local shrines have become known to the wider public. Their new identities further substantiate Habib Luthfi's attempt to recover an old bin Yaḥyā spiritual leadership in Java. The Bā ʿAlawīs of the Arab quarter of Pekalongan, however, have remained skeptical about the tombs' new identities. One person told me how "Habib Luthfi likes to claim old graves of *kyais* as bin Yaḥyā." Another man told me how Habib Luthfi has been engaged in the *Yaḥyānisasi kuburan kuno*, that is "Yaḥyānization of old tombs."[206] Such expressions of skepticism are part of their continuing accusations of Habib Luthfi as someone who likes to make present things that do not exist, or, *mengada-ada*. Nevertheless, for other actors like the villagers, to make present things that perhaps did not exist actually translates into making present a pilgrimage economy that did not previously exist. Indeed against the lack of clear documentary evidence to the contrary, the appearance of important personalities, money, and commodities is taken as evidence of the veracity of Habib Luthfi's claim. In other words, the proof lies in the *social consequences*, which are as much socioeconomic as symbolic. Old tombs like those of Mbah Angsono and Mbah Surgi act as spatial apertures susceptible to genealogical composition precisely due to the lack of historical specificity and the lack of specific contradictory information.

Ritual Composition of Genealogy

So far I have described Habib Luthfi's discursive/textual and spatial genealogical compositions. While mausoleums have served to corroborate Habib Luthfi's genealogical talks (and texts), in themselves they are socially less efficacious. Mausoleums need to become signs of authority for others to see. They need to be filled with pilgrims. One way to achieve that is by instituting

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[206] This expression is a play on Golkar's project of *kuningisasi* — painting state offices with the yellow color of the party or decorating cities with yellow flags and banners — during the New Order period.

rituals in the mausoleums. For all of the mausoleums he has built, Habib Luthfi has also instituted ritual commemorations (*ḥawl*) or public pilgrimages (*ziyāra*). Every year he organizes and funds the commemoration of ʿUmar b. Ṭāha in Indramayu, inviting his disciples and *jamāʿa* as well as traditionalist scholars living around the regency, thereby introducing them to the new pilgrimage site. The fact that Habib Luthfi himself attends the commemoration is enough to ensure a big turnout. Habib Luthfi also organizes the joint *mawlid*-commemorations at the mausoleums of Habib Abū Bakr/Mbah Angsono and Habib Muḥammad/Mbah Surgi as part of his RMKS *mawlid* circuit. The annual commemoration of Habib Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad bin Yaḥyā in Pulau Panjang (Panjang island), Jepara is jointly organized by *Kanzus Shalawat* and the regent of Jepara, together with the commander of the navy base (*Danlanal*) of Semarang who provid speedboats to transport pilgrims from Jepara to the island. Over the years the numbers of attendees to these events have steadily increased although they are still not comparable to the more established commemorations. The large turnout at these new ritual events remains tied to the figure of Habib Luthfi. It is he who enables different state apparatuses to support the event, and it is he who primarily attracts the pilgrims. Thus in 2012, when Habib Luthfi suddenly told the organizers of the Pulau Panjang commemoration that he would not be able to attend that year's event on the established date, the organizers chose to reschedule the event to suit Habib Luthfi's agenda. One of the organizers told me that it would be risky to go ahead with the commemoration without Habib Luthfi's presence as he is the primary reason for people's interest in the event. This is of course different from the more established saintly commemorations, all of which have a fixed annual date, usually the date of the saint's death. One can say that in the case of the established commemorations, the living follow the dead, while in Habib Luthfi's case, the

dead follow the living.[207] As such, the stability of the new mausoleums as pilgrimage destinations has not been fully achieved.

Figure 8.12: Habib Luthfi visiting Pulau Panjang for the commemoration of Habib Abū Bakr bin Yaḥyā. In this picture he is escorted by the regent of Jepara (in purple batik), banser and navy officers.

[207] This is illustrated by an observation made by the anthropologist Nur Syam of the annual commemoration of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Asmaraqandi — the father and grandfather of several of the nine saint of Java — held every 20 Dhū al-Ḥijja at his tomb in Tuban, East Java. At first, the organizers of the commemoration was insistent on inviting Habib Luthfi to deliver the main sermon, which he did for several years. In 2002, Habib Luthfi told the organizers that he wont be able to attend the commemoration that year except if they move the commemoration to a later date. While the organizers granted Habib Luthfi's request, the shift in timing created a confusion among the regular attendees of the commemoration. Since then, the organizers decided not to invite Habib Luthfi (Syam 2005: 193).

Two of the recent ritual events instituted by Habib Luthfi, however, have over the years become more stable, namely, the public *ziyāra* (pilgrimages) to the tomb of Tāha b. Ḥasan (Sumodiningrat) in Cileduk (West Java) and to the tomb of Habib Luthfi's direct grandfather Hāshim b. ʿUmar in Pekalongan. These two events are more stable than the others because they were instituted as part of the annual *mawlid* at *Kanzus Shalawat*. The *ziyāra* to the tomb of Ṭāha b. Ḥasan takes place fifteen days before Habib Luthfi's *mawlid.* Unlike the other events, however, Habib Luthfi himself does not attend the *ziyāra.* Rather, the event is led by two of his *ṭarīqa* deputies, *kyai* Masroni of Semarang and *kyai* Adib Zen of Solo. The event is attended by two to three thousand pilgrims, mostly people from the area together with some of Habib Luthfi disciples who come from other places. The event consists of collective recitation of the Qurʾān and invocations on behalf of the deceased, and concludes with a collective recitation of the *rātib al-kubrā,* a litany attributed to Ṭāha b. Ḥasan. I will speak more of this litany below. The second ritual event, the *ziyāra* to the mausoleum of Hāshim and his son ʿAlī (Habib Luthfi's father) takes place annually on the eve of the annual *mawlid.* Again, Habib Luthfi does not attend the event as he is usually preoccupied with receiving guests who have come to Pekalongan for the *mawlid*. The *ziyāra* is led by Habib Luthfi's deputies. During the two times that I have attended the event, not more than four hundred people attended. The ritual begins with collective recitation of the Qurʾān and invocations on behalf of the deceased, and concludes with a collective recitation of the *rātib al-kubrā.*

***Rātib al-Kubrā* (The Great Litany)**

Let me finally say few words about the *rātib al-kubrā.* A *rātib*, as I have explained in chapter 2, is a litany, an anthology made up of Qurʾānic verses, poetic prayers and invocations, some of

which are to be repeated several times. The recitation of the *rātib* ends with supplications on behalf of the Prophet, his family and companions, as well as the composer of the *rātib*. The *rātib* has been the pivotal devotional text of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya*. Bā ʿAlawīs who practice their *ṭarīqa* usually recite the *rātib* on a daily basis, whether singularly or collectively. Three *rātibs* — which are quite similar to one another — have been popular among the Bā ʿAlawīs: the *rātib* of ʿAbdallāh b. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs, the *rātib* of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAṭṭās, and the *rātib* of ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād. Usually they are referred to as *rātib* al-ʿAydarūs, *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās, and *rātib* al-Ḥaddād, and indeed, while they are recited not only by the Bā ʿAlawīs, they have achieved a kind of fame as a family litany connected to the institution of the *manṣabate*. For example, the *jamāʿa* of the al-Ḥaddād *manṣabate* of Tegal (Central Java) tends to exclusively recite the *rātib* al-Ḥaddād. The *jamāʿa* of the al-ʿAydarūs saintly shrine of Luar Batang (Jakarta) tends to stick to the *rātib* al-ʿAydarūs. Similarly, the al-ʿAṭṭās *manṣabs* of Pekalongan and Bogor only lead the collective recitation of the *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās. In other words, these family *rātibs* have become one of the constitutive elements of the *manṣabate* authority. As the direct descendant of the composer of the *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās, the *manṣab* of Pekalongan reserves the right to grant permission or license (*ijāza*) to recite the family litany to his *jamāʿa*. As a result, in a place like Pekalongan, the *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās has been very popular. As one walks around the city after the twilight prayer, one can hear the recitation of the *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās from the speakers of the neighborhood *langgars* (small prayer house).

In 2006, Habib Luthfi introduced his *jamāʿa* to another Bā ʿAlawī *rātib*, the *rātib al-kubrā*, which he claimed was composed by his ancestor, Ṭāha b. Ḥasan (Sumodinigrat), who is buried in Ciledug. What is intriguing is that on the cover of the actual copy of the *rātib*, which

has now been mass-produced, Habib Luthfi's name is written as its composer. The final supplication of the *rātib*, however — after naming the Prophet, his family and companions, and several luminaries of the *Ṭarīqa ʿAlawiyya* — mentions "our master, the compiler of the *rātib* (*ṣāḥib al-rātib*), the sultan of the saints (*sulṭān al-awliyāʾ*), Habib Ṭāha b. Ḥasan bin Yaḥyā" (Bin Yahya n.d.: 20). When I inquired to Habib Luthfi about this discrepancy, he explained to me that his ancestor Ṭāha b. Ḥasan did compose the *rātib* and that he only added few invocations to the original text.[208] Reading through the contents of the *rātib al-kubrā*, one can see that the litany is to a large extent similar to other Bā ʿAlawī *ratībs.* What differentiates it from the other *rātibs* is the last part of the litany consisting of several *ṣalawāt* (salutation to the Prophet) formulas, all of which can also be found in the *Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid*, the *ṣalawāt* anthology compiled by Habib Luthfi's teacher, Shaykh Abdul Malik (see: chapter 5). At least for the present writer, the *rātib al-kubrā* looks more like a synthetic litany, a combination of Bā ʿAlawī *rātibs* and several *ṣalawāt* formulas from the *Miftāḥ al-maqāṣid*. This, however, does not necessarily mean that Habib Luthfi actually authored the text while retrospectively positing it as the work of his great-grandfather. After all, the *ṣalawāt* formulas that make up Shaykh Abdul Malik's anthology were also compiled from other sources. Some were inherited and transmitted through generations of masters and disciples. Theoretically at least, Shaykh Abdul Malik could have inherited the same *ṣalawāts* from Ṭāha b. Ḥasan.

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[208] The practice of adding few lines to an old text and claiming the new text as one's own was not uncommon in medieval Europe, whereby A may respond to a text written by B by adding materials to it, thereby producing a new text that belongs to A. Central to this is the assumption that authority is a property of the work and not the author, which in turn is proven by its ability to generate other works. Recall that the basic meaning of the word "authority" is "growth," hence an authoritative text is a text that grows into other texts. See: Carruthers [1990] 2008: 262-3. Similar to the Islamic manuscript tradition, medieval European manuscript tradition was also cumulative.

Habib Luthfi himself does not negate his authorial involvement in the composition of the *rātib al-kubrā*. What is clear, however, is that for the *jamāʿa* of Habib Luthfi, the litany is considered as the work of Ṭāha b. Ḥasan. Consequently, the bin Yaḥyā family can now claim to have its own family litany just like other Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabate* families. Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa* recite the *rātib al-kubrā*, which has become increasingly popular in Pekalongan alongside the *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās. Unlike the *ṭarīqa* manual and other litanies that Habib Luthfi received from Shaykh Abdul Malik through the Naqshabandī or Shādhilī *silsilās*, the *silsilā* of the *rātib al-kubrā* is posited as exclusively Bā ʿAlawī and inherited through the *nasab* or blood lineage. Thus, with the *rātib al-kubrā,* Habib Luthfi's *silsilā* and *nasab* re-converge. This, however, does not mean that the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan or other places accept the new Bā ʿAlawī *rātib*. The common view among the Bā ʿAlawīs of Pekalongan is that the *rātib* is Habib Luthfi's invention rather than something inherited through lineal transmission, and that he is trying to position himself like the great Bā ʿAlawī saints and composers of the *rātibs*. The fact that most Bā ʿAlawīs have never heard of this *rātib* until very recently is taken to be evidence pointing to its newness. One Bā ʿAlawī scholar from Jakarta even ridiculed the name of the *rātib,* saying:

> even the name is grammatically erroneous! *rātib* is masculine singular, and its adjective *kubra* is feminine, so it should be *al-rātib al-akbar* and not *rātib al-kubrā.* If you want to use the feminine adjective *kubrā,* then the noun should be pluralized: *rawātib al-kubrā*, and not *rātib al-kubrā*. Even if the name is already erroneous, what makes you think that we ought to believe it to be something written by a great saint or scholar?

Despite the rejection of most Bā ʿAlawīs, the *rātib al-kubrā* continues to circulate among Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa,* becoming increasingly popular. It may be the case that with the persistent growth of Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa*, the *rātib al-kubrā* will replace *rātib* al-ʿAṭṭās as the most recited Bā ʿAlawī litany in Pekalongan. Perhaps.

Return to the *Kraton*

Every year the celebration for the anniversary (*hadeging nagari*) of the *kraton* of Yogyakarta begins with a pilgrimage of the royal family and court retainers (*abdi dalem*) to the tomb of the first sultan, Hamengku Buwana I in the royal graveyard complex of Imogiri. In 2011, Habib Luthfi was invited to lead the pilgrimage. On the evening following the royal pilgrimage, a ritual recitation (*semaan*) of the Qurʾān followed by a sermon was held at the *kraton.* The open event in the *kraton* was attended by Habib Luthfi's *jamāʿa,* the traditionalist Muslims of Yogyakarta, and several members of the royal family and courtiers, although the Sultan himself did not attend. Habib Luthfi delivered the sermon.[209] Whilst delivering his welcoming speech, Gusti Joyo declared to the audience that the *kraton* had chosen a theme for the anniversary celebration: "realizing a Javanese Caliphate" (*mewujudkan kekhalifahan jawi*). He said, "no need to be afraid of the word 'caliphate,' as this is in the context of culture" (*tidak perlu takut dengan khalifah, ini konteksnya budaya*).[210] In his speech, Habib Luthfi reinforced Gusti Joyo's point that the time has come for the *kraton* to become recognized once again as the principal Islamic center of Java. He explained to the audience that the *kraton* was actually a Javanese caliphate built through the relationship between the monarch and the saints.

> But the colonizers divided us, and now is the time for Muslim scholars to return to the *kraton.* Since the time of HB I, the *kraton* of Yogyakarta has been the center of Sufism, the center of *ṭarīqa*. In those days, they followed the *Ṭarīqa Shaṭṭārīyya.* Today there are

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[209] Between 2011 and 2013, Habib Luthfi led the annual royal pilgrimage to the tomb of Hamengku Buwana I and delivered the evening sermon following the ritual recitation of the Qurʾān.

[210] Gusti Joyo explicit description of the Javanese caliphate as a cultural entity was aimed to differentiate his project from the project of establishing a political caliphate articulated and pursued by several transnational Muslim groups with branches and connections in contemporary Indonesia, like the Hizbu Tahrir. In other words, the opposition highlighted by this statement is not that of religion and culture, but that of religion and politics. During the anniversary of the *kraton* in 2013, Gusti Joyo repeated his call for a realizing a Javanese cultural Caliphate. See: *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, April 6, 2013.

> many *ṭarīqas,* and they are all good. They are all teaching the *sunna* of the Prophet. So, the *kraton* is the home of the *ṭarīqas,* and it's about time that the *ṭarīqas* come home.

The message was loud and clear. Both Habib Luthfi and Gusti Joyo had been preparing to repair the old fractured connection between the *kraton* and the *ṭarīqa,* the sultan and the saint, and perhaps on a more personal level, the Yogyakarta royal dynasty and the bin Yaḥyā saintly dynasty.

Figure 8.13: Habib Luthfi leading the royal pilgrimage to the tomb of Hamengku Buwana I

Such a project, however, was not supported by the Sultan, Hamengku Buwana X, who was more reluctant — at the time at least — to initiate any alteration to the status quo. Thus in the several *kraton* events featuring Gusti Joyo and Habib Luthfi, the Sultan never made an appearance. Without the Sultan's support, Gusti Joyo's maneuver was limited even though he

was the second highest *kraton* official. But Habib Luthfi and Gusti Joyo were not thinking about that present moment. They were preparing for the future. The Sultan, after all, does not have any male heir and according to the law of the *kraton,* only a male can ascend the throne. As such, Gusti Joyo was the heir apparent to the throne of Yogyakarta. This vision for the future was brought home during a conversation that occurred during one of my visits to Yogyakarta with Habib Luthfi in April 2012. The conversation was between Habib Luthfi and Gusti Joyo's son, K.R.T Jayaningrat and took place in the presence of the former's Yogyakarta-based disciples. Habib Luthfi told Jayaningrat not to worry, that he will one day become "the sun of Mataram" (*suryo mentaram*). Habib Luthfi also told him that he and his disciples will be behind the young prince, just as the nine saints were behind Raden Patah, the first ruler of Demak. The young prince listened attentively to Habib Luthfi, humbling himself in the presence of the Sufi *murshid*. At the time, the scene looked anachronistic to me, as if it came out from the *Babad Tanah Jawi,* the court chronicles recounting the history of Java. But perhaps such is the history of Islamic Java, an ongoing tale of cooperation and contestation between saints and sultans. A classic theme, indeed, but one with endless variations.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown how through discursive/textual, spatial, and ritual genealogical compositions, Habib Luthfi has been able to present himself as an heir to an old Bā ʿAlawī bin Yaḥyā spiritual leadership akin to other Bā ʿAlawī *manṣabates,* but one which is more rooted in Javanese history and connected to the *kraton*. As a retrospective project, genealogical composition does not necessarily constitute a denial of historical time. But, similar to the act of making music — which is an act of bringing different sounds that came before, after, and

simultaneously, into a state of "constant interdependency" (Barenboim & Said 2002: 112) — genealogical composition opens up the past to various contingent processes and unstable relationships with the present. It generates ambiguity in the relationship between the past and the present, such as in regards to whether the "bin Yaḥyā *manṣabate*" — and its constitutive elements like narratives, rituals, and sacred spaces — is truly inherited through the *nasab/silsilā* or whether it is just a contemporary construction, and even the future, such as the case with Habib Luthfi and Gusti Joyo's prospective plan for the *kraton*. Genealogical composition also enters into the space or aperture opened up by ambiguity, such as the old tombs of Mbah Angsono and Mbah Surgi. While genealogical composition posits the past as real and not mere fiction, its reality, however, "is neither absolute nor divorced from the linguistic reality of its writing" (Florida 1995: 398). Like a symphony, genealogical composition becomes efficacious when it is performed in an orchestra by different actors — each with his/her own role. As such, it is sustained by a web of social relations, which in turn subjects it to the risk of disintegration. Thus to comprehend genealogical composition is to look at the complex and shifting social terrain where authority over knowledge and knowledge-production is actively negotiated, contested, and continuously reproduced.

Conclusion

> There is only one perfume whose fragrance is agreeable to the Creator, that of surprise in beholding events that he does not control, but which he makes happen.
>
> -Bruno Latour, *On the Modern Cult of the Factish God*

On the last day of December 2013, G.B.P.H Joyokusumo passed away (*Kompas,* December 31 2013). The man, who had been hailed by many to be the heir to the throne of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta, was only fifty-eight when he died, leaving the royal family and court retainers to question who would succeed Hamengku Buwono X. On 30 April 2015, the Sultan of Yogyakarta formally issued a *sabdaraja,* a royal decree, which, among other things, erases the title "Caliph of Allāh" (*khalifatullah*) from the Sultan's formal title.[211] The unforeseen decision to erase the caliphal title seemed to be taken to clear the way for another decree that was issued a few days later, whereby the Sultan elevated the royal title of his eldest daughter to that of G.K.R Mangkubumi, a rank reserved for a formal heir to the throne. The two decisions sparked protests among the Sultan's siblings, who criticized the ruler for violating the time-honored tradition of

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[211] Since the inception of the Sultanate, the formal title of its ruler is:

> *Ngarso dalem sampeyan dalem ingkang sinuwun kanjeng sultan hamengku buwono senopati ing ngalaga ngabdurrakhman sayidin panatagama khalifatullah ingkang jumeneng kaping sedasa ing ngayogyakarta hadiningrat.*
>
> His majesty the Sultan Hamengku Buwono, commander in the battlefield, servant of the Most Gracious (*ʿabd al-Raḥmān*), the master (*sayyid*) regulator of religion, the Caliph of Allāh, the tenth in Yogyakarta.

The new formal title is:

> *Sampean dalem inkang sinuwun sri sultan hamengku bawono inkang jumeneng kasepuluh surya ning mataram, senopati ing ngalaga langenging bawono langgeng langgeng ing toto panotogomo*
>
> His majesty the Sultan Hamengku Bawono the tenth [in Indonesian rather than Javanese], the sun of Mataram, commander in the battlefield, delight of the Everlasting world, everlasting regularity of the regulator of religion.

the Sultanate. It is the first time that a woman has been chosen as an heir to the throne and the Sultan claims that his decision was based on an instruction that he received from God and his ancestors.[212] Outside the royal court, spokespersons for the two major traditionalist and modernist Islamic organizations — the NU and the Muhammadiyah — also regretted both decrees, viewing them attempts to efface the Sultanate's Islamic identity (*Koran Tempo,* May 7 2015). Whatever results from this drama of royal succession, one thing is evident: the articulatory project that attempted to realign the *ṭarīqa* and the *kraton,* jointly pursued over the past few years by Habib Luthfi and Gusti Joyo, came to an abrupt end.[213]

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The 2015 *sabdaraja* of Hamengku Buwono X is a good moment to conclude this dissertation. The unanticipated event reinforces one simple but crucial point that has been developed in the foregoing pages, namely that any form of articulatory project can fail. In this dissertation, I have tried to show how as a historical and sociological reality, Islam is an articulatory project of cultivating an ideally growing socio-discursive assemblage — a *jamāʿa* — that revolves around the Prophetic *sunna*. Such an articulatory project has given rise to congeries of *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas* that have taken on different forms and figurations. At times, these *jamāʿas* conflict with one another. Other times, they form synergies and engender an even bigger *jamāʿa*. *Sunna*-

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[212] The decree explicitly states, "I received an instruction from our Lord Allāh Most Great, the powerful creator, my father, and my forebears, the Mataram ancestors…" (*nampa welinge dhawuh Gusti Allāh, Gusti Agung, Kuasa Cipta lan rama ingsun eyang-eyang ingsun, para leluhur Mataram*) (*Koran Tempo*, May 9, 2015).

[213] It seems that after the failure of the articulatory project in the *kraton* of Yogyakarta, Habib Luthfi is now attempting to approach the other Javanese *kraton*, that of Surakarta (Solo). The move came following several meetings between Habib Luthfi and the deputy ruler of the *kraton* Surakarta, K.G.P.H. Puger. In June 2015, Gusti Puger announced to the press that Habib Luthfi "has agreed to work with me to re-enhance Islamic civilization in *kraton* Surakarta." He added that "in the past, *kraton* Surakarta was very attentive to the development of Islam both in civilizational and socio-cultural term due to its predicate as an Islamic kingdom. This is what I want to revive" (*Kedaulatan Rakyat*, June 9, 2015).

aligned *jamāʿas* have also formed alliances or run into conflicts with other socio-political formations, like the state. Such articulatory projects hinge on the role of human connectors. But connectors may suddenly die, leaving their projects incomplete and their *jamāʿas* leaderless. Other actors who have historically performed such connecting roles like the Sultan of Yogyakarta — the caliph of Allāh and regulator of religion — may suddenly decide to drop such a role to allow for other projects, like facilitating the coronation of a female family member. The case of the Sultan of Yogyakarta further shows how at times, a position that was historically perceived to carry the responsibility of a connector may cease to do so — as a result of to numerous causes, including but not limited to, the Sultanate's precarious entanglement with the colonial state. Projects may go wrong, and indeed they have gone awry. Such is the contingent and indeterminate character of the complex and continuously shifting terrain of human (and non-human) sociality — that ontological plane of incessant becoming — in which Islam as an articulatory project takes place.

Throughout the chapters of this dissertation I have attempted to unravel the various historically and geographically situated projects of aligning the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa*. Such articulatory projects have resulted in different articulations of the *sunna,* diverging materialization of *jamāʿas* and diversified figurations of religious authority. Positing the *sunna* and *jamāʿa* as historically situated socio-discursive formations subject to articulatory and calibrating projects allows us to develop a contextualized approach to Islam without having to attribute any notion of orthodoxy to a particular teaching, group, or sect, and heterodoxy to others, while still retaining a monophyletic commonality. Insofar as Islam involves teachings and practices about being human that also attempt to reproduce and extend interpersonal relations, it

is fundamentally a political project. The task of an Anthropology of Islam is therefore to unravel the entanglements that make up a *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* and to trace the various inter-personal and inter-objective associations, movements, linkages, and brackets that have enabled such a formation to take shape, endure, expand, or fade.

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Positing Islam as an articulatory project means that Islam is premised on *participation*, a mode of relating to and constructing a shared reality (Tambiah 1990). It becomes possible through relations of contiguity, existential immediacy, contact, and shared affinities, all of which have to be persistently maintained. Actors participate in each other's lives, they build intimacy, connectedness, and sense of being a part of an ensemble of relationships with each other and with the past. By participating in a shared project called Islam, Muslims actively attempt to fill the socio-discursive gaps that separate them from each other and bridge the temporal ellipses that separate them from the Prophet. Whatever the global and universal picture — or the panorama, to use Bruno Latour's term (2005: 187-90) — actors have attempted to conjure of Islam, some of which are informed by desires for an expansive wholeness and centrality, such a picture is always assembled, maintained, and sustained in concrete localities and through different technological mediations, where it becomes susceptible to the variabilities and the vicissitudes of life. At the same time, Muslims live in differentiated societies, they engage in different genres of discourse and language games that are linked to multiple contexts of communication and practice, and they participate in different practices of world-making that often time generate tensions between members of the same *jamāʿa* as well as between different *jamāʿas.*

The partial portrait — or perhaps more accurately, the montage — of Islam that I have tried to sketch in this dissertation is one that stands in a stark contrast to the ideological postulation of Islam as a deculturalized, deteritorialized, and depoliticized religion (Roy 2002). Islam takes shape in a complex inter-personal and inter-objective field and Muslims have differential and indeterminate relations to Islam. The *sunna* and the *jamāʿa* are articulated and experienced in different ways, and between the two are various works of mediation, through which the former is filtered through interpersonal relations, inter-objective associations, and particularized experiences. In order to capture these dynamics, however, we need to break down the unit of Islam or *umma*, and instead focus on Islamic projects, that is, projects of articulating the *sunna*, assembling the *jamāʿa* (in whatever shape or form), and calibrating the two. Positing projects as a point of departure means maintaining a commitment to the micro context, even of the biggest world and history-making schemes like religion (Tsing 2000). Examining Islamic projects allows us to develop an understanding of how a world religion can move from one region of the world to another, how they are caught up in local issues of translation and mobilization, without ever having the capacity to guarantee their success or realize their visions. Both temporal continuity with the Prophetic past and the flow and circulation of ideas that facilitate the spatial expansion of Islam demand constant work of building, rebuilding, and maintaining channels that facilitate them. Indeed things and ideas do not just flow and circulate. They need channels and avenues that demand constant enactment and maintenance. Posited in this way, Islamic religious authorities can be perceived as bridge-builders. They are actors who have been able to create and sustain such channels, whether vertical channels linking them to the Prophet as the basis of their

legitimacy, or the horizontal channels that link them to their fellow Muslims who in turn can recognize their authorities, and hierarchically revolve around them.

This, however, does not mean that we are back to the notion of multiple Islams that operate in a zero-sum-game, that is, positing that one either take Islam as a predefined religion or as a relational ongoing, and plural production of meaning. What I have been suggesting in this dissertation is that Islam is the name of a project of aligning the sunna and the jamāʿa, two notions that have taken different forms and possibilities. There is, in other words, a common reference point, that of the Prophetic past. But that common reference point lies in the past, thereby necessitating retrospective construction and reconstruction. The pertinent question that need to be asked by anthropologists or historians is not "what is Islam?" but the various processes, negotiations, and channel-buildings — such as those that I have described in this dissertation — that have allowed that particular question to be raised and addressed as well as the processes that empower some actors to raise and answer that question in socially efficacious way. In short, it is a question about the ways in which particular human actors become empowered to articulate the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa.* This question alludes to the basic query that Marshal Sahlins once posed, namely, "how history makes the history-makers" (2004: 155). How does a discursive tradition make the tradition-makers? How does Islam make the makers of Islam? To comprehend Islam as an articulatory project is therefore to look at how particular actors become empowered and recognized to mediate, reproduce, and diversify the *sunna* and the *jamāʿa,* how they embed and realize the two foundational Islamic concepts in the indeterminacy of human social becoming. This, in my view, is the challenge for an Anthropology of Islam.

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One final thought. In this dissertation I have examined what I describe as *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿas,* hierarchically-structured, inter-personal, and localizable Islamic social assemblages — each with its own ideology of scale — that revolve around the figures of connectors or articulators of the *sunna*. While the historical realities of such formations have been recognized by historians and social scientists, often times, they are teleologically posited as "older" or "traditional" and are therefore bound to recede with modernization. What I have attempted to show in this work is precisely how there continue to exist such Islamic assemblages, which indeed resemble, in important ways, their historical analogs. Having said this, the long nineteenth-century did bring about new ideas and technological innovations that have allowed for the envisioning and enactment of a radically different form of sociality, that of the mass-mediated reading publics premised on relations between strangers living in different places. With this came the idealized and abstracted notion of the responsible and disinterested participants posited to be free of the interests and determinations of any particular social location (Warner 2005). This historical development has generated tremendous impacts on the Muslim world, allowing for divergent envisioning and materializations of Islam. As such it needs to be carefully studied particularly in relation to the social formations I have described as the *sunna*-aligned *jamāʿa* without, however, succumbing to another teleological narrative. If there is no figure to mediate between the reading publics and the *sunna* can one describe them as *jamāʿas*? Unfortunately I am currently in no position to provide a satisfactory answer. What I simply want to do by raising this question is precisely to highlight the need for further research into historical and contemporary Islamic social assemblages that seemingly depart from, but nevertheless are related to the models that I have tried to present in this work.

Appendix A:
The Story of Moses & al-Khiḍr as told in the Qurʾān and the *Ḥadīth*

Moses said to his servant, ‘I will not rest until I reach the place where the two seas meet, even if it takes me years!’. But when they reached the place where the two seas meet, they had forgotten all about their fish, which made its way into the sea and swam away. They journeyed on, and then Moses said to his servant, ‘Give us our morning meal! This journey of ours is very tiring.’ And [the servant] said, ‘Remember when we were resting by the rock? I forgot the fish — Satan made me forget to pay attention to it — and it [must have] made its way into the sea.’ ‘How strange!’ Moses said, ‘Then that was the place we were looking for’. So the two turned back, retraced their footsteps, and found one of Our servants — a man whom We had granted Our mercy and whom We had given knowledge of Our own. Moses said to him, ‘May I *follow* you so that you can *teach* me some of the right guidance you have been taught?’ The man said, ‘You will not be able to bear with me patiently. How could you be patient in matters beyond your knowledge?’. Moses said, ‘God willing you will find me patient. I will not disobey you in any way.’ The man said, “If you follow me then, do not query anything I do before I mention it to you myself.’

They travelled on. Later, when they got into a boat, and the man made a hole in it, Moses said, ‘How could you make a hole in it? Do you want to drown its passengers? What strange thing to do!’ He replied, ‘Did I not tell you that you wold never be able to bear with me patiently?’ Moses said, ‘Forgive me for forgetting. Do not make it too hard for me to follow you’. And so they travelled on. Then, when they met a young boy and the man killed him, Moses said, ‘How could you kill an innocent person? He has not killed anyone! What a terrible thing to do!’ He replied, ‘Did I not tell you that you would never be able to bear with me patiently?’ Moses said, ‘From now on, if I query anything you do, banish me from your company — you have put up with enough from me.’ And so they travelled on. Then when they came to a town and asked the inhabitants for food but were refused hospitality, they saw a wall there that was on the point of falling down and he man repaired it. Moses said, ‘But if you had wished you could have taken payment for doing that.’ He said, ‘This is where you and I part company. I will tell you the meaning of the things you could not bear with patiently: the boat belonged to some needy people who made their living from the seas and *I desired to damage it* because I knew that coming after them was a king who was seizing every [serviceable] boat by force. The young boy had parents who were people of faith, and so, we had every reason to fear that he would trouble them through wickedness and disbelief, [and so] *we desired that their Lord should give them another child* — purer and more compassionate — in his place. The wall belonged to two young orphans in the town and

there was buried treasure beneath it belonging to them. Their father had been a righteous man, so *your Lord desired them to reach maturity* and then dig up their treasure as a mercy from your Lord. *I did not do* [these things] *on my own accord*: these are the explanations for those things you could not bear with patience.’ (Q. 18: 60-82, emphasis added).

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The Qurʾānic story of Moses and al-Khiḍr has been commented upon and clarified by the Prophet as recorded in several *ḥadīths*. Below is one of these *ḥadīths* as narrated by Bukhārī in his collection (Book 5, *ḥadīth* no. 4726). The parts where the narrator introduced variations to the story that he heard from different transmitters are italicized:

Ibn ʿAbbās said, Ubay b. Kaʿb said, The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

Once Moses, Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), preached to the people till their eyes shed tears and their hearts became tender, whereupon he finished his sermon. Then a man came to Moses and asked, 'O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)! Is there anyone on the earth who is more learned than you?' Moses replied, 'No.' So Allāh admonished him (Moses), for he did not ascribe all knowledge to Allāh. It was said, (on behalf of Allāh), 'Yes, (there is a slave of ours who knows more than you).' Moses said, 'O my Lord! Where is he?' Allāh said, 'At the junction of the two seas.' Moses said, 'O my Lord ! Tell I me of a sign whereby I will recognize the place.' "

ʿAmr said to me, Allāh said, "That place will be where the fish will leave you." Yaʿlā said to me, "Allah said (to Moses), 'Take a dead fish (and your goal will be) the place where it will become alive.' “

So Moses took a fish and put it in a basket and said to his boy-servant "I don't want to trouble you, except that you should inform me as soon as this fish leaves you." He said (to Moses)." You have not demanded too much." And that is as mentioned by Allah: 'And (remember) when Moses said to his attendant .... ' (18.60) Joshua. (*Saʿīd did not state that*). The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "While the attendant was in the shade of the rock at a wet place, the fish slipped out (alive) while Moses was sleeping. His attendant said (to himself), "I will not wake him, but when he woke up, he forgot to tell him The fish slipped out and entered the sea. Allāh stopped the flow of the sea. where the fish was, so that its trace looked as if it were made on a rock.

ʿAmr forming a hole with his two thumbs and index fingers, said to me, "Like this, as in its trace was made on a rock."

Moses said "We have suffered much fatigue on this journey of ours." (*This was not narrated by Saʿīd*). Then they turned back and found al-Khiḍr.

ʿUthmān b. Abī Sulaymān said to me, (they found him) on a green carpet in the middle of the sea.

Al-Khiḍr was covered with his garment with one end under his feet and the other end under his head. When Moses greeted him, he uncovered his face and said astonishingly, 'Is there such a greeting in my land? Who are you?' Moses said, 'I am Moses.' Al-Khiḍr said, 'Are you the Moses of the children of Israel?' Moses said, 'Yes.' al-Khiḍr said, "What do you want?' Moses said, ' I came to you so that you may teach me of the truth which you were taught.' Al-Khiḍr said, 'Is it not sufficient for you that the Torah is in your hands and the Divine Inspiration comes to you, O Moses? Verily, I have a knowledge that you ought not learn, and you have a knowledge which I ought not learn.' At that time a bird took with its beak (some water) from the sea: al-Khiḍr then said, 'By Allāh, my knowledge and your knowledge besides Allāh's Knowledge is like what this bird has taken with its beak from the sea.' Until, when they went on board the boat (18.71). They found a small boat which used to carry the people from this sea-side to the other sea-side. The crew recognized al-Khiḍr and said, 'The pious slave of Allāh.'

We said to Saʿīd "Was that al-Khiḍr?" He said, "Yes."

The boat men said, 'We will not get him on board with fare.' Al-Khiḍr scuttled the boat and then plugged the hole with a piece of wood. Moses said, 'Have you scuttled it in order to drown these people surely, you have done a dreadful thing. (18.71)

Mujahid said. "Moses said so protestingly."

Al-Khiḍr said, didn't I say that you can have no patience with me?' (18.72) The first inquiry of Moses was done because of forgetfulness, the second caused him to be bound with a stipulation, and the third was done intentionally. Moses said, 'Call me not to account for what I forgot and be not hard upon me for my affair (with you).' (18.73) (Then) they found a boy and al-Khiḍr killed him.

Yaʿlā said: Saʿīd said 'They found boys playing and al-Khiḍr got hold of a handsome infidel boy laid him down and then slew him with knife.

Moses said, 'Have you killed a innocent soul who has killed nobody' (18.74) Then they proceeded and found a wall which was on the point of falling down, and al-Khiḍr set it up straight.

Saʿīd moved his hand thus and said 'al-Khiḍr raised his hand and the wall became straight. Yaʿlā said, 'I think Saʿīd said, 'al-Khiḍr touched the wall with his hand and it became straight

Moses said to al-Khiḍr, 'If you had wished, you could have taken wages for it.'

Saʿīd said, 'Wages that we might had eaten.'

And there was a king in furor (ahead) of them" (18.79) And there was in front of them.

Ibn ʿAbbās recited: 'In front of them (was) a king.' It is said on the authority of somebody other than Saʿīd that the king was Hudad bin Budad. They say that the boy was called Haisur.

'A king who seized every ship by force. (18.79) So I wished that if that boat passed by him, he would leave it because of its defect and when they have passed they would repair it and get benefit from it.

Some people said that they closed that hole with a bottle, and some said with tar.

'His parents were believers, and he (the boy) was a non-believer and we (al-Khiḍr) feared lest he would oppress them by obstinate rebellion and disbelief.' (18.80) (i.e. that their love for him would urge them to follow him in his religion), 'so we (al-Khiḍr) desired that their Lord should change him for them for one better in righteousness and near to mercy' (18:81). This was in reply to Moses' saying: Have you killed an innocent soul.'? (18.74). 'Near to mercy" means they will be more merciful to him than they were to the former whom al-Khiḍr had killed.

Other than Saʿīd, said that they were compensated with a girl. Dawūd b. Abī ʿĀsim said on the authority of more than one that this next child was a girl.

Appendix B: Ibn Yaḥyā's *tadhkira* to the Javanese pilgrims of Surabaya

In the name of God most Gracious most Merciful

O ye who believe! Fear Allāh and be with those who are true [Q. 9:119].

All praise be to Allāh who has made piety (*taqwā*) as a cause for goodness in this world and the next. God's salutation be upon our master Muḥammad, His prophet and His chosen one (*muṣṭafāhu*), and to his elevated family and companions. This is a reminder from he who is in need of God's mercy, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar to our brethren, the pilgrims (*al-ḥujjāj*) residing in Surabaya. [They have] requested [from] me this [reminder]. I have seen their commitment to goodness, their acceptance of the truth, and their assistance in reviving the symbols (*shaʿāʾir*) of the religion. May God increase them and us in this, and lead them and us to the best path. Know o brothers that this religion is built on five things:

First: Beneficial knowledge, and that is which introduces you to your Lord; His commandments and prohibitions; and [that teaches] abstention from the world, desire for the hereafter, and humility; and that which discourages you from great sins, jealousy, envy, the desire for respect in the hearts of men, and being impervious to the truth. Any knowledge that results in these [spiritual/psychological] states is beneficial knowledge to our states and possessions. Any knowledge that does not result in what we have described, is harmful knowledge. It will not result in anything in the two abodes except disgrace and decay. This [beneficial] knowledge is divided into two: exoteric and esoteric. As for the exoteric: the knowledge of the law (*fiqh*). And among its sources are beneficial books for every seeker: *mukhtaṣar bā fadhl*, and *ʿumdat al-sālik*, and *mukhtaṣar al-anwār*, and the *minhāj* of Imām al-Nawawī. As for the esoteric: the *bidāya al-hidāya* of al-Ghazālī, the *al-naṣāʾiḥ al-dīniyyah* of al-Ḥabīb ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād, also *risāla al-muʿāwanah* and *risāla al-mudhākarah* by the same author, and the *minhāj al-ʿābidin* of al-Ghazālī.

Second, teaching this knowledge to those who are ignorant, especially his [al-Ghazālī] selected writings on creeds (*al-ʿaqāʾid*): the creeds of al-Ghazālī *(ʿaqīda al-ghazālī*), and other abridged treatises on theology such as *matn jawharat al-tawḥīd*, and *taʿlīm al-ʿishrīn al-ṣifa*, without learning the [*umm*] *al-barāhīn*. As for the last book, it is forbidden to learn it, except for those who have mastered several sciences and have the intelligence and acumen as cautioned by the Imams, such as al-Ghazālī and Shaykh Ibn Ḥajar. They forbid the teaching

the book to the ordinary people. And the people of this age are ordinary (ʿ*awām*). We have mentioned earlier the selections of books in the legal sciences and Sufism. However, the novice should start by learning short and gentle abridged manuals. Of particular importance is the *Sullam al-tawfīq* of our master and shaykh, my maternal uncle ʿAbdallāh b. Ḥusayn bin Ṭāhir Bā ʿAlawī. Our lover (*muḥibbunā*), the Haji Muḥammad Ḥāshim has received the text and we have read it in the Ampel mosque in the presence of our lover Haji Muḥammad Arshad for the most part. Beware, and beware of occupying oneself with learning any knowledge before learning these short manuals, as these texts have collected a lot of important things that have to be put first before the others.

Third: being truthful to God with sincerity in knowledge and work. Truthful to God's creations in advising, teaching, and instructing them in the good, while prohibiting them from any evil, first with gentleness and soft speech, then with warnings and reminders, and finally with pressure and anger freed from whims and debased passions.

Fourth: Leaving any pretension of being a man of knowledge and positioning oneself as a teacher to the ignorant while having no ability on such matters. As it will only bring calamities to the person and his followers. The Prophet, May peace and blessing be upon him and his family, said:

> God does not snatch away knowledge from the chests of His servants, but He takes away knowledge by the death of scholars, until, when there are no more scholars remaining, the people take ignorant leaders [as scholars]. And these leaders will be asked [by the people], and they will respond without any knowledge, and they will be misguided, and misguide others.

This is narrated by al-Bukhārī and Muslim. There seem to multiply in this land those about whom the master of all masters (*sayyid al-sādāt*) had warned. Many occupy themselves with teaching and giving legal opinions (*fatwā*) without the necessary knowledge and mastery, resulting in destruction and catastrophe. Many people are led astray because of them, and the sins that result from such confusions remain continuously and accrue upon them even after their death. And among the disasters of those phony men is their preoccupation with learning great tomes, which no one has the ability to master except the ʿ*ulamā*ʾ and the erudite sages (*jahābadha al-mubarrizīn*), and as a result they make mistakes in comprehending their intended meanings. This leads to the obfuscation of [legal] boundaries. Thus, what is suitable for them is to occupy themselves with simple texts (*al-mukhtaṣarāt*), so that they can gain some knowledge that will lead them to its conclusions. As such, they will learn what is obligatory upon them. And among the calamities is their preoccupation with uncommon problems, without any finality. There is no benefit in learning them. They hope that in discussing such matters in their gatherings, they will be seen as illustrious ʿ*ulamā*ʾ. They do not know that the Prophet— may God and peace and blessings be upon him— forbade from *al-aghlūṭāt,* (irresolvable questions of doctrine). So beware, and beware of [occupying oneself with] such matters, as it constitutes something without benefit (*al-fuḍūl*), which only results in anger and discord. It is an approach through which satan led people to pride and arrogance.

Fifth: Inviting [people] to the collective performance of the five obligatory prayers, calling [people] to it in the markets and streets, and echoing the *adhān* (the call to prayer). Such acts are among the symbols (*shaʿāʾir*) of Islam and *Imān* (faith). Commit to it with perseverance, and invite every Muslim to it. When they gather, teach them interactively, and summarize for them the commandments of the religion. This is because the ordinary people do not benefit from the reading of books. They do not fully understand the arguments and explanations [of these books]. And those who are teaching them [the masses] should approach them in their gatherings, their congregations, their fathers, and their mothers. By doing so, they will revive Islam and they will gain God's mercy.

I ask the almighty God to secure you and us in all goodness, and to protect us from all evils. May God's salutation and blessing be upon our master Muḥammad, his family and his companions. And all praise belongs to God the lord of the two universes.

Appendix C: Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia.

This list of Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* is taken from a 2013 calendar published by the Islamic study group *Majelis Ta'lim wad Da'wah* of Malang, East Java. The calendar contains photos of notable Bā ʿAlawī scholars, information on, and monthly agenda of *Majelis Ta'lim wad Da'wah*, and a yearlong agenda of Bā ʿAlawī *ḥawls* in Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia. Such a calendar is sold at Islamic bookshops, *pesantrens*, or at stalls around saintly mausoleums or during Islamic religious gatherings.

Month	Date	Commemorated Saint	Place
Muḥarram	First Sunday	Hādī b. ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥaddār	Banyuwangi, East Java
Muḥarram	Second Sunday	Abū Bakr b. Sālim	Cidodol, Jakarta
Muḥarram	27	Abū Bakr b. Ḥusayn al-Saqqāf	Bangil, East Java
Muḥarram	Last Monday	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddād	Malang, East Java
Ṣafar	Second Sunday	Ḥusayn b. Hādī al-Ḥāmid	Brani, Probolinggo, East Java
Ṣafar	27	ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlī al-Ḥaddād	Bangil, East Java
Ṣafar	Last Sunday	Ḥasan b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddād	Tanjung Priok, Jakarta
Rabīʿ I	11	ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Aḥmad Bilfaqīḥ	Bekasi, West Java
Rabīʿ I	First Sunday	Aḥmad b. Sālim al-ʿAydarūs	Malang, East Java
Rabīʿ I	Third Sunday	Aḥmad b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād	Kalibata, Jakarta
Rabīʿ I	Tuesday before the last Thursday of the month	ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAṭṭās	Condet, Jakarta
Rabīʿ I	Wednesday before the last Thursday of the month	ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥsin al-ʿAṭṭās	Bogor, West Java

Month	Date	Commemorated Saint	Place
Rabīʿ I	Last Saturday	Muḥsin b. Muḥammad al-ʿAṭṭās	Condet, Jakarta
Rabīʿ I/ Rabīʿ II	Monday After the last Thursday of Rabīʿ I	Sālim b. Aḥmad bin Jindān	Cawang, Jakarta
Rabīʿ II	20	ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī	Solo, Central Java
Rabīʿ II	Thursday after the *ḥawl* in Solo	ʿAlawī b. Sālim al-ʿAydarūs	Malang, East Java
Rabīʿ II	23	Muḥammad b. ʿAydarūs al-Ḥabashī & Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Miḥḍār	Surabaya, East Java
Rabīʿ II	29	ʿUmar b. Muḥammad bin Hūd al-ʿAṭṭās	Cipayung, West Java
Rabīʿ II	Third Thursday	Muḥammad b. Sālim al-ʿAṭṭās	Singapore
Rabīʿ II	Third Saturday	Nūḥ b. Muḥammad al-Ḥabashī	Singapore
Rabīʿ II	Third Sunday	ʿUmar b. ʿAbdallāh al-Khaṭīb	Singapore
Jumād I	Last Thursday	Muḥammad b. Ḥusayn al-ʿAydarūs	Surabaya, East Java
Jumād II	First Sunday	Aḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-ʿAṭṭās	Bendungan Hilir, Jakarta
Jumād II	Second Saturday	Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaddād	Surabaya, East Java
Jumād II	Second Sunday	Jaʿfar b. Shaykhān al-Saqqāf	Pasuruan, East Java
Jumād II	Third Saturday	ʿAlī b. Jaʿfar al-ʿAydarūṣ	Batu Pahat, Malaysia
Jumād II	Last Saturday	ʿAbdallāh ʿAwaḍ ʿAbdun	Malang, East Java
Jumād II	Last Sunday	Abd al-Qādir b. Aḥmad Bilfaqīḥ	Malang, East Java
Rajab	First Sunday	Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir Bā ʿAbud	Ploso, Kediri, East Java
Rajab	27	Shaykh b. Sālim al-ʿAṭṭās	Sukabumi, West Java
Rajab	29	Miḥḍār b. Muḥammad al-Miḥḍār	Bondowoso, East Java

Month	Date	Commemorated Saint	Place
Shaʿbān	First Saturday	ʿAbdallāh b. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs	Johor Bahru, Malaysia
Shaʿbān	First Sunday	Yūsuf al-Anqāwī	Sumenep, Madura
Shaʿbān	Second Saturday	Sunan Ampel	Surabaya, East Java
Shaʿbān	Second Sunday	ʿAbd al-Qādir b. ʿAlawī al-Saqqāf	Tuban, East Java
Shaʿbān	10	The three Bā ʿAlawī saints of Kampung Bandan	Kampung Bandan, Jakarta
Shaʿbān	14	ʿAḥmad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Aṭṭās	Pekalongan, Central Java
Shaʿbān	15	Muḥammad b. Ṭāhir al-Ḥaddād	Tegal, Central Java
Shaʿbān	16	Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Saqqāf	Indramayu, West Java
Shaʿbān	Third Saturday	ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥabashī	Kwitang, Jakarta
Shaʿbān	Friday, Saturday, and Sunday after the the 15th of Shaʿbān	The Bā ʿAlawī saints of Palembang	Palembang, South Sumatra
Shaʿbān	Last Friday	Sālim b. Ṭāhā al-Ḥaddād	Kalibata, Jakarta
Shaʿbān	Last Sunday	Aḥmad b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād	Kalibata, Jakarta
Shawwāl	Second Thursday	Shaykh b. Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ	Surabaya, East Java
Shawwāl	Sunday after the Second Thursday	Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥsin al-Ḥāmid	Tanggul, Jember East Java
Shawwāl	12	ʿAydarūs b. Sālim al-Jufrī	Palu, Central Sulawesi
Shawwāl	Last Saturday	Aḥmad Bā Faqīḥ	Yogyakarta
Shawwāl	Last Sunday	Husayn b. Abū Bakr al-ʿAydarūs	Jakarta
Dhū al-Qaʿdah	First Saturday	ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Dhū al-Qaʿdah	Second Sunday	ʿAlawī b. Muḥammad Hāshīm al-Saqqāf	Gresik, East Java

Month	Date	Commemorated Saint	Place
Dhū al-Ḥijjāh	17	Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad al-Saqqāf	Gresik, East Java
Dhū al-Ḥijjāh	17	Harūn b. ʿAbdallāh Bā Harūn	Gresik, East Java

Appendix D:
The *Silsilā* of Ṭarīqa al-Shādhilīya al-ʿAlawiyya

Allāh

The Archangel Gabriel (*Jibrīl*)

The Prophet Muḥammad

ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib

Ḥasan b. ʿAlī

Abī Muḥammad Jābir

Abī Muḥammad al-Ghazwānī

Abī Muḥammad Fatḥ al-Suʿūd

al-Sayyid Saʿad

al-Sayyid Saʿīd

Abī al-Qāsim Aḥmad al-Marwānī

Abī Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Baṣrī

al-Sayyid Zayn al-Dīn

al-Sayyid Shams al-Dīn

al-Sayyid Tāj al-Dīn

al-Sayyid Nūr al-Dīn

al-Sayyid Fakhr al-Dīn

al-Sayyid Taqī al-Dīn

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Madanī al-Maghribī

ʿAbd al-Salām b. Mashīsh

Abī al-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī

Abī al-ʿAbbās al-Mursī

Abī al-Fatḥ al-Maydūmī

Taqī al-Dīn al-Wāsiṭī

al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Qalqasandī

Nūr al-Qarāfī

ʿAlī al-Ajhūrī

Muḥammad al-Zurqānī

Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim al-Sakandarī

Yūsud al-Ḍarīrī

Muḥammad al-Bahītī

Aḥmad Minnat Allāh al-Mālikī al-Azharī

ʿAlī b. Ṭāhir al-Madanī

Ṣāliḥ al-Muftī al-Ḥanafī

Aḥmad al-Naḥrāwī

Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Malik

Muḥammad Luṭfī b. ʿAlī bin Yaḥyā

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